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A DIARY.

Stockholm, 1st November, 18—.

IN THE MORNING HOUR.

“ANOTHER day, another revolution of light and shade. Enjoy thy existence, sayest thou, holy dawn of morning, animating glance of love, beam of God! Thou wakest me once more from my darkness, givest me a day, a new existence, a little life. Thou lookest upon me in this light and sayest, follow the moments! They scatter in their flight, light and flowers; they conceal themselves in clouds, but only to shine forth again all the lovelier; follow them, and let not the shade find thee before thou hast begun to live!”

Thus thought I with a great, home-departed spirit, as in the dawn of morning I awoke and saw the beam of daylight penetrating into my chamber, and involuntarily stretched forth my arms to meet it. It was neither bright nor cheerful; it was the misty beam of a November day, but still light from the light which brightened my life's-day, and I greeted it with love.

May the light of my life's-day, like that of the morning, be—an ascending one! whether its beam shine through mist or through clear air is all one! if the day only increases, if only life become more bright.

After an absence of ten years I visit anew the home of my childhood; whether for a longer or a shorter time circumstances will determine. Independent in fortune and position in life, I can now, after a captivity of many years, enjoy freedom, and at thirty years of age follow merely my own will.

I arrived here last evening, a few days earlier than I was expected, and thus could not by any possibility flatter myself

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that on my account the house of my stepmother was so splendidly lighted up as I found it on stopping before it. Ah, no! On the contrary, it was terribly difficult to find anybody who would trouble themselves in the least about me and my affairs.

At length I stumbled upon a maid-servant, whose kind countenance and manner immediately pleased me, and who, as soon as she perceived who I was, busied herself actively about me and mine. "Ah!" exclaimed she, as she conducted me up a winding staircase covered with carpeting which led to my room, "how vexatious it is! Her Grace gives to-day a little ball to celebrate Miss Selma's birthday, and now they have taken off their cloaks in your room, Miss; how untidy it looks!—But see! they did not expect you earlier than next week, and therefore nothing is in order."

"It does not signify!" said I, as with some consternation I looked round the room which my stepmother in her letter had praised as an "excellent chamber," and which was now filled with gentlemen's and ladies' cloaks, with fur boots and over-shoes. The music of one of Strauss's intoxicating waltzes came from below, producing an effect half-animating, half-depressing; and I thought, if I sit myself down quietly among these empty human habiliments and listen to this music, and think, "Here sit I, a forlorn stranger in the country, whilst they below are making merry with dancing, then—I shall become melancholy, and shall begin to write an appendix to Solomon's sermon, 'All is vanity!' But if I too go down among those joyful people, and entertain myself with looking at them, and whilst they whirl about in the gallopade and the waltz, make my——"

A dim idea unfolded itself suddenly in my head, like the butterfly from the chrysalis. I turned round to Karin—such was the name of my obliging maiden—and prayed her to inform nobody in the house of my arrival, but on the contrary, to assist me in putting on my black silk dress and other things, necessary for a hasty toilet. I wished to steal into the company unannounced and unknown. Karin understood my idea, thought it merry, and helped me quickly and efficiently; so that in half an hour I could show myself with honour in the saloon, and hoped to remain unobserved, a

part of the "*foule*" which, as I knew of old, was very considerable in the soirées of my stepmother. And to tell the truth, I was not altogether dissatisfied to be able to look about me a little, and, as it were, to prepare myself for acquaintance with relatives whom I had now not seen for so many years.

As I entered the dancing-room a gallopade was being danced. I stole along by the wall, and soon fortunately found a place in a corner. The music, the noise, and the strong blaze of light, almost bewildered my brain. When I had a little recovered my senses, I looked about curiously for the countenances of my connexions; above all, my eye sought for my young sister Selma, although almost without hope of recognising in the young girl of twenty, the tender, delicate child which I had not seen for ten years.

"But the sole daughter of the house," thought I, "the heroine of the day, must still be easy to discover among the others: she must certainly precede every one in the dance, and must be put forward and honoured before all others!" and I sought inquiringly among the couples who were floating round in the gallopade. The dance seemed to me enchanting.

"*Ah, les reines du bal!*" said now an elderly gentleman of complacent but somewhat decrepid exterior and relaxed features, who stood near me; and I saw a young officer of dragoons dancing onward with two young ladies who riveted my whole attention, so beautiful and brilliant were they. I took it for granted that one of these must be my sister Selma; but which of them? They had a remarkably great sisterly resemblance, and yet on close observation there was a peculiar manner which made them unlike. The lively, refined, captivating grace which distinguished the one who was dressed in white gauze and blond, was wanting in the other, who wore bright rose-coloured crape, and whose figure was somewhat larger, yet who meantime was unquestionably the handsomer. Her dancing was characterised by that joyously-bounding life, which is said to constitute the spirit of Fanny Elslér's dancing, whilst that of the other—the white one—had more of the noble,

pure grace which I myself have admired in Maria Taglioni. Either might be Selma. The more I regarded the white one, the more I wished that she might be my sister.

But is it, indeed, possible, that the somewhat self-willed doll, "little me," as Selma called herself in her childish years, should have changed into this sylph-like being, whose countenance beamed with soul and innocent joy?

The other had more of the proud SELF, which looked forth in the child Selma; perhaps she might be my sister Selma? Should I be able to love her much?

Whilst this contest between the red and white rose went on in my mind, and I purposely asked no explanation from my neighbour, willing to await the answer from chance, I heard the gentleman who had exclaimed "*les reines du bal*," congratulated by another upon being "*a rich old bachelor*."

"The life of a rich old bachelor," said he with a sigh, which awakened in me the thought that he found himself burdened with as many wives and children as Rochus Pumpernickel—"the life of a rich old bachelor is indeed a continual——"

"The life of a rich old bachelor," said the first speaker also with a sigh, "is a splendid breakfast, a tolerably flat dinner, and a most miserable supper!"

Whilst I listened to the communication of the two gentlemen, and observed "*les reines du bal*," I remarked that a man between thirty and forty, in naval uniform, of a frank and strong exterior, with a pair of serious, honest eyes—was noticing me. This gave me pleasure—I do not know why. I also remarked that the son of Neptune steered ever nearer and nearer to me, and—unexpectedly seated himself by my side. I cannot at this moment rightly comprehend how we fell into discourse, and still less how I came to confide to him my observations on the two stars of the ball, and least of all, how I could feel so communicative and well acquainted with a person entirely strange to me. The person smiled at my confidential communications, and inquired if I wished for any explanations from him? I replied that this evening I had set out on a voyage of discovery, and had taken Chance for my helmsman, and would let him direct my course. My new acquaintance warned me of the danger of giving

myself up to such a helmsman, and sought with delicacy to dive into the intention of my undertaking. I answered evasively; the conversation was jesting, and it seemed to me as if a great ship of war was amusing itself by chasing a little brig, which nevertheless succeeded, by rapidly tacking about, perpetually to escape it. In the mean time we came, quite unexpectedly, into very deep water, namely, into the innermost of the soul and of life, and we soon were contending about that which constitutes the highest weal or woe of human life. We had in this subject entirely different views, because, whilst I, in the calmness of temper and clearness of thought, sought for the haven of felicity, the son of Neptune found it merely in the life and strength of feeling. I asserted that in this way he never would come into the haven, but would always find himself on the outside of it, in the open stormy sea. He had nothing to say against this. It was exactly upon the open stormy sea that he had found happiness. I declared myself opposed to the disquiet of a Viking life; he against a life of quiet and ease. I spoke of the dangers of shipwrecks under the guidance of the feelings, and remembered Odin's words in Havamal, "Insecure is that which one possesses in the breast of another." The seaman betook himself to Christianity, and thought with the Apostle, that without love all things in the world were sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. I bowed myself before human love: this was precisely my proposition. But in regard to private relationships, I found it to be in the highest degree necessary to be able to sing at all times,

I care for nobody, nobody,
And nobody cares for me!

The seaman laughed, but shook his head, and said, "You would not be able to sing so, and could not sing so, if you had had the happiness—to have children."

"Perhaps not," replied I, in an indifferent tone; pleased in myself to find that my new acquaintance was, as I had already suspected, a married man, and the father of a family.

We were here interrupted by the ending of the gallopade and the dancing ladies seeking for resting-places, on which

my neighbour stood up. The view through the dancing-room was now freer, and permitted one through the open doors to look into the saloon, where turbaned "gracious ladies" occupied the divans, and several gentlemen with stars and ribbons moved about them.

"Ah, there she is!" thought I, with sudden emotion, as a lady of noble figure and noble bearing came in sight, whilst in conversation with an elderly gentleman, she slowly approached the dancing-room.

Yes, that was she; still the same as ever in appearance, grave, beautiful, and tasteful in dress. I recognised the strings of real pearls, with jewelled clasps, which surrounded her neck and her lovely arms, which I would so willingly have kissed in my childhood; I recognised the beautiful countenance, and the carriage, so imposing, and yet so full of grace. She was still the same as, twenty years ago, she had stood a half-divinity before my eyes in the magnificent saloons of the capital; when she, as wife of "the District Governor," did the honours, with the looks of a queen; yes, she was still the same as I then had seen her, and nothing more distinguished have I seen since then—although I have looked well about me in the world—and probably never shall, and yet It was my stepmother! My heart beat anything but lightly, as I saw her slowly approach the side of the room where I sate, and anticipated the moment of recognition; it came.

The glance of my stepmother fell on me; she started, and looked again observantly; I stood up; she hastened towards me, and we soon embraced each other; not without mutual embarrassment, which the surprise, and mutual excuses—from me, on account of my arrival; from her, on the condition of my chamber—helped to conceal. My stepmother now called "Selma! Selma!" and the white sylph floated towards us, and I clasped my young sister in my arms, glad that she was "the white rose," and delighted to see such a kindly joy beam from her dear blue eyes, as blushing, she heartily bade me welcome.

At this moment my glance involuntarily met that of my former neighbour, who from some little distance observed us, with a gentle, half-melancholy smile. After this, my step-

mother called "Flora!" and beckoned; but Flora, occupied in lively discourse with some gentlemen, did not immediately hear. Selma hastened to her, took her by the arm, and returned with her to me. I saw "the red rose," the other queen of the ball, before me. Selma whispered, "Sophia! thy and my cousin, Flora!"

My cousin Flora Delphin, whom I now saw for the first time, greeted me courteously; and after a short and indifferent conversation, she turned again to her gentlemen.

"For this evening no more acquaintance, my sweet Selma," I now besought. "I know that I here must have several, to me, yet unknown relations; but I would rather defer making their acquaintance till another time."

"All the better!" answered she; "then I can yet a while alone belong to you. I shall not dance this dance—I must chat with you." And now, as a quadrille was played, Selma's partner approached; she excused herself to him, and introduced him to a young lady who was sitting, and whom he led to the dance. On this, she seated herself near me, asked with warm interest after things which concerned me, and reminded me, with a voice full of tender emotion, how I had been so good to her in her childhood, told her tales, had brought about pastimes, and little merry-makings and such like, in order to please her.

"This time, Selma," interrupted I, "you must tell me tales; but, of course, only true ones; because I am totally unacquainted with the world which surrounds me here, and would willingly be conducted into it; or much rather, without any trouble on my part, have it brought to me."

"Ah! you have addressed yourself exactly to the right person," said Selma, with comic dignity; "and in order to begin now my office of chief mistress of the ceremonies, thus—who shall I, in the first place, have the honour of introducing to you in this company?"

"Oh! the stately lady there, with the bird-of-paradise waving in the turban of silver gauze, and in a dress of black velvet—she, who now talks with your mamma and laughs—a fine woman; she might represent the queen of night."

"So she is," answered Selma, laughing. "Signora Luna, as we sometimes call her, or, 'our lady with the bright eyes;'

she is lady of honour to her majesty the queen, where, as one knows, night is turned into day; she will please you; she belongs to our very best acquaintance, and this evening, over and above, Signora Luna is at the full; shall I not immediately intro——”

“No! no! not this evening; Signora Luna is, at this moment, too splendid for me. Who is the tall gentleman who now talks with her? a stately figure also, but somewhat ostentatious.”

“Respect! I pray for—Alexander the Great, or the Great Alexander—he has translated the logic and rhetoric of Aristotle; a most learned man, and the proper husband for the handsome Mrs. Luna.”

“Humble servant! But my best one, here is the strangest company in the world—truly not of this world. Signora Luna and Alexander the Great! I wonder what celestial dignitary will next have the honour—that officer, for example, I would gladly know his name; he talks now with a gentleman who wears an order; an honest countenance; but he seems to me to belong a little to the earth.”

“Not so entirely, for he belongs more to the sea. We call him ‘the Viking’—for the rest he is called Commodore Captain Brenner, a very brave and distinguished man. Do you know with whom he speaks?”

“No, but I would willingly learn. Of a certainty he is called Aristides, or—Axel Oxenstjerna. I think I have seen him before.”

“That is Baron Thorsten Lennartson: you will see him here; he was Felix Delphin’s guardian, and is now Flora’s guardian.”

“He is the same whom I fancied I knew again. You have given him no character-name, Selma; but I should like to give him one!”

“And what?”

“I would call him ‘My Lord,’ to distinguish him from many other barons, because he seems as if he could be lord over himself; what say you?”

“You have said it excellently. It seems to me as if you had known him long.”

“I have seen him years ago, and——but there stands a

person beside Flora, whom, I think, I have seen also formerly ; a regular, but marble-cold countenance ; rather sallow, Voltaire-like features !”

“ One of your relatives too ! My and your brother-in-law, the Envoyé St. Orme ; who only a few months ago came here from Paris.”

“ Virginia’s husband ! Ah, I ought to have recognised him : but it is above ten years since I saw him, at Virginia’s marriage. How beautiful she was ! That she must so soon leave the earth ! One year after her marriage !”

“ Yes, on the anniversary of her wedding,” said Selma, with a voice that showed a painful remembrance. For this reason I continued my inquiries.

“ And that young officer with whom you were dancing ; a distinguished, handsome young man ?”

“ Another relation, Felix Delphin, Flora’s brother. Is not Flora gloriously beautiful ?”

“ Very beautiful !”

“ And how witty ! how richly gifted ! She has at least a dozen talents.”

“ That were almost too much !” said I, laughing ; “ and now, thanks, my sweet Selma, that you have so richly entertained me. I now see a gentleman approaching you with dancing intentions, and you shall not any longer drive your partners to desperation on my account. Be easy about me ; I amuse myself excellently with looking on the dance, and on the new, interesting acquaintance that I have made, Signora Luna, Alexander the Great, my Lord ——.”

“ Bestow a glance on the philosopher,” said Selma, archly, and pointed to a servant in the livery of the family who approached with a tray of ices, and had a very grave countenance, with the features of a parrot.

“ Take care, Jacob,” continued she, merrily addressing him, “ and look before you, that we do not waltz over you.”

“ Oh heaven defend me, Miss !” replied the philosopher, with a rough voice, whilst a sudden illumination passed over his countenance, but which speedily resumed its dark expression, as he remained standing before me with his tray.

“ Miss ” floated away in the waltz, light as a breath.

Immediately after this my stepmother came up to me, with

"the rich old bachelor," wearing the French order, and introduced "Your uncle, Chamberlain X."

My uncle seated himself near me, and began the conversation with much politeness, which advanced from some compliments on myself, to a tolerably witty criticism of others, but which had a less digestible relish in a spiritual sense.

Whether it were that I was wearied by the journey, or by the noise of the ball, or was spoiled by the conversation which I had already enjoyed, certain it is that this did not please me, and a sort of twilight mist spread itself before my eyes over that animated life which had just before been so brilliant. At the same time I listened with pleasure to the praises of my stepmother. "A most excellent person," said my uncle. "I know no one in whom I have so great a confidence, no one on whom one can so much depend. When I would do a little good in secret, and would not wish it to be known, I always betake myself to her."

The Viking had left the company, after having at going out cast towards me a parting glance, which lived in my remembrance like a little point of light. Signora Luna's brilliant appearance vanished from our horizon, in order to ascend into the horizon of the Court, where she was at this moment in attendance. I only saw Selma when between the dances she came with a friendly word or a question bounding towards me: thus I saw her also now by the side of her mother, now by an elderly lady in the company, as if she would make all happy.

After supper, somewhat occurred the impression of which I shall long retain. There arose a lively movement in the saloon, and I saw how my young sister was borne in an arm-chair under the chandelier, whose light beamed around her, and the most animated vivat-cry resounded from the encircling gentlemen.

"My lord" was among those who thus exalted the young heroine of the festival, and right beautiful and princess-like sate she there, in the strong blaze of light, herself beaming with the charm of youth and becoming joy. An exclamation of admiration and homage went through the whole assembly. As my eyes sunk from the almost dazzling view, they were arrested by a countenance whose expression gave, as it were, a stab to my heart. It was the countenance of Flora.

Vexation, envy, anger, lay in the almost spasmodic movements which thrilled through and disfigured the beautiful features,—but only for a moment. As her eyes encountered mine, that expression changed itself again; and soon afterwards she laughed and joked with the Envoyé St. Orme, who was seldom from her side, and whose observant and cold glance had for me something repulsive.

As I now wished to steal away from the company, my stepmother showed a determined resolution of accompanying me to my chamber; but, on my warm opposition, allowed herself to be persuaded to remain quietly, and not to let Selma—who was again engaged for a dance, observe anything.

When I returned to my chamber, I found it changed. The disorderly articles of dress which were scattered about had vanished, and order, taste, and kind attention had set its stamp upon everything in this large and handsome room.

“The young lady herself has been up here, and has looked after everything,” said Karim, again replenishing the fire, which had burned low.

“Thanks, my young sister,” said I in my heart.

I was fatigued, and soon slept, but had disturbed dreams. All the people upon whom, in the course of the evening, my attention had been directed, I thought I saw arrange themselves in a quadrille with threatening gestures, and ready to pounce on one another. I found myself among them, and just on the point of—skirmishing with my stepmother. At one time floated past a sylph-like being, with glimmering wings, smiling lips, and enchanting zephyr-like movements, and danced between us, and wove us together with invisible but soft ribbons, and this sylph, this other Taglioni, was—Selma!

During this apparition, the tension of mind relaxed; the bitterness ceased, the enemies made *chaine*, and I sank into a refreshing, sweet sleep, which let me forget the whole world, till the new morning awoke me.

And now, whilst all is quiet in the house, and seems to repose from the dance, I will take a somewhat nearer view of my past and present circumstances.

I have passed through with my stepmother two entirely different periods. The first I will call

THE PERIOD OF MY IDOLATRY.

At the age of eleven I saw my stepmother for the first time, and was so captivated that I adored her. This continued till my fifteenth year, when I was separated from her. But bitter were my days in this time of my idolatry, because never could a golden idol have been more deaf and silent to the prayers of its worshipper than was my stepmother to my love. Besides this, I was a violent child, and in my whole being the opposite of the lovely and the agreeable, which my stepmother so highly valued, and of which she unceasingly spoke in quotations from the romances of Madame de Genlis. I was compared with the enchantresses in these romances, and reprobated in proportion. In one word, my stepmother could not endure me, and I could not endure—Madame de Genlis and her graces, who occasioned me so much torment. Ah! the sunburnt, wild girl, grown up on the “moors” of Finland, whose life had passed in woods and on heaths, among rocks and streams, and amid dreams as wild and wonderful as the natural scenery amongst which she grew; this girl was in truth no being for the saloon, for a French Grace. Transplanted from the fresh wilderness of her childhood into the magnificent capital, where huge mirrors on every side reflected every movement, and seemed scornfully to mimic every free outbreak which was not stamped by grace—she was afraid, afraid of herself, afraid of everybody, and especially of the goddess of the palace. The governess and the servants called me “the Tartar-girl,” “the young Tartar.” My stepmother was never severe towards me in her behaviour, but crushed me by her depreciatory compassion, by her cold repulsion; and I soon could not approach her without burning cheeks, and a heart so full, so swollen—if I may say so—with anxious sighs, that the tongue in vain sought for a word. To find any fault in my stepmother was what I never thought of. Every, every fault lay certainly in me; but ah! I knew not how I should behave in order to become different, in order to become agreeable to her. I know that at this time more than once I besought Heaven on my knees never to give me a lover, if it, on the contrary, would only give me the love of my

mother. But Heaven, deaf to my prayer, gave me a lover, but—not the love of my mother; and I must learn to do without it; which was made easier to me by my being removed from her, and transplanted into another sphere of life, and—where also I suffered, but in another way.

Five years afterwards I came again into my father's house, and passed some time there. This epoch in relation to my former idol may be called

THE EPOCH OF OPPOSITION;

for it was in many things opposed to the former. I had, after severe combat with life, and with myself, moulded myself to a stern and truth-loving being, who would see reality in everything, and who despised all that appeared to be gilded in life as miserable froth. French worldly morality, accomplishment, and grace, were an abomination to me, towards which I now assumed as perfectly a well-bred demeanour as my stepmother had formerly assumed towards my world of nature. The shining veil through which I had regarded her had now fallen off. I now saw faults in her, and saw them through a magnifying-glass. She pleased me still, but I loved her no longer.

I had fallen in love with the spirit of Thorild, had imbibed his love of truth and integrity, but at the same time somewhat also of his less pleasant way of uttering them. And now clashed together Madame de Genlis and Thorild, in the least pleasant manner, through my stepmother and me. For every quotation from Madame de Genlis I had, always in warlike opposition, a quotation ready from Thorild, and my stepmother answered in the same spirit. Nevertheless, by degrees, the French marquise yielded to the Swedish philosopher; that is to say, she relinquished the field because such a rude fellow struck about him. It is to me a strange, half-melancholy remembrance, that my stepmother at this time was really afraid of me, and avoided me, evidently grieved by my unsparing earnestness. Several times also she endeavoured to govern and to overawe me; she would at times resume the sceptre, but in vain; it was broken in her hand: she saw this, and yielded silently and somewhat dispirited.

At the recollection of the harsh feeling I had at times, when I remarked this reaction in the relationship between us, I cannot help a secret shudder ; and would exclaim warningly to all over-severe parents, the counsel of the Apostle—" Parents, provoke not your children to anger !"

The fault was this time, for the most part, on my side. But I was embittered by the remembrance of that which I had suffered ; and besides this, to say nothing of Thorild, was unclear in my views of life, and unhappy in my soul ; and this must be some apology for me. My stepmother, a joyous, and pleasant, and much esteemed lady of the world, was entirely accustomed to the sunny side of life, and wished only to see this. I was more accustomed to the dark side, and thus we separated more and more.

One bond of union existed at this time between us ; the little Selma, a delicate, but interesting child. She seemed, by I know not what incomprehensible sympathy, attracted to me ; which yet, according to my Thorildish love of justice, did not at all accord with the reverence which was shown to her at home. But I could not help feeling myself drawn to her. She was her father's darling, and his chiefest occupation. He was a friend and pupil of the great Ehrensvärd, of the man with the severe and pure sense of beauty, and he wished to form out of his daughter a being as harmonious and lovely as the ideal which he bore in himself : and not the eleven thousand heroines of modern scenes and novels, but the antique Antigone, so beautiful as woman, whilst she was so masculinely noble, was the prototype upon which he early directed the eye and heart of his daughter. Thus created he in her a new Antigone, and enjoyed through her a life which very weak health had rendered somewhat joyless. My stepmother was about this time very much occupied by her daughter Virginia, who by her beauty and her character might well flatter the pride of a mother. Admiration of her, and tenderness towards Selma, led us sometimes to an accordance of feeling.

We were again separated ; and now that after ten years we are again come into contact, I am not without some uneasiness on account of our living together. Will it bring about a union, or—a deeper separation ? One of the two, that is

quite certain ; because my stepmother, just as little as myself, has stood still during her decennium. We both have lived to see sorrow. My stepmother has lost her husband and her beloved eldest daughter, and I, I have——yet, nevertheless, that is now over, and I——am free.

That I am now better than when we last met, I will venture to hope. The philosophy which then made me so proud and so disputatious, has since then made me peaceable ; THOUGHT has laid its quiet and regulating hand upon my brow ; and life has cleared itself up, and the heart has calmed itself. Books have become my dearest companions ; and observation, a friend which has accompanied me through life, and has led me to extract honey from all plants of life, even the bitter ones also. Thorild is still for me, as ever, a star of the first magnitude ; but I no longer follow him blindly, and I have also become possessed of eyes for the constellation of Madame de Genlis. In one thing will I always truly follow him——namely, in his doctrine, unceasingly to study and inquire after the good in all things.

On the shore where I was born, on the alder-fringed streams of Kautua, I often went, as a child, pearl-fishing, when the heat of the sun had abated the rigour of the water. I fancy still that the clear, cool waves wash my feet ; I fancy still that I see the pearl muscles which the waterfall had thrown together in heaps in the sand of the little green islands. Whole heaps of these muscles I collected together on the shore, and if I found one pearl among them——what joy ! Often they were imperfect, half-formed, or injured ; still sometimes I found right beautiful ones among them. Now will I again go out to fish for pearls, but in——the stream of life.

The 2nd of November.

I was yesterday morning interrupted by the messenger who called me to breakfast, and the messenger was my young sister, whose silvery clear voice asked at my door, “ May I come in ? ” Yes, to be sure you may ! besides, sylphs are not easily bolted out, and one opens willingly the door and heart when a being like Selma desires to enter, and with a benevolence and joy beaming from the diamond-bright eyes bends before us, and shows us tokens of friendship and kindly

inclination. She was so charming, my young sister, in the flower of youth and life; in her simple, well-chosen, tasteful dress; and, above all, in her captivating manner, that I seemed to see in her the personification of the muse of Franzén, whose name she bears.

"God guard thee, thou lovely being!" thought I, silently, as I observed her; and something like a painful foreboding brought tears into my eyes.

Not without a beating of the heart did I follow her down stairs, and prepare myself to see my stepmother and my home by daylight.

But my feeling of anxiety vanished as I entered the inner drawing-room, and my stepmother met me with looks and words which seemed the expression of cordial good-will. Beyond this, everything in the room was comfortable—atmosphere, furniture, to the inviting coffee service glittering with silver and fine china.

"This is good indeed!" thought I.

Nothing here gave me greater pleasure than the sight of the collection of good oil-paintings which decorated the walls of the two drawing-rooms. At the very moment when I was about to express my feelings on this subject, Flora entered. I scarcely recognised again the queen of the last night's ball. The delicate complexion appeared coarse by daylight; the eye was dim; the dress negligent; and the beautiful countenance disfigured by an evident expression of ill temper. Selma, however, gains by being seen in daylight; her complexion is delicate and fair; and her eyes have the most beautiful light, and the clearest glance, that I have ever seen in a human eye.

We seated ourselves to breakfast. We spoke of last evening's ball. My stepmother made on the occasion a little speech from the throne, which I had heard already in former times, but which had always somewhat embarrassed me. I was silent the while; but it excited in me a secret opposition, which I fancy my stepmother suspected; I know not otherwise why her glances were so often inquiringly directed towards me. Selma's merry remarks interrupted the speech, and made us all laugh. Flora became again animated, and was witty and satirical. I put in my word also, and our gracious lady-mother appeared highly delighted. We brought into review various good acquaintance in last evening's ball;

various toilets were criticised. In the mean time, Selma gazed roguishly at my collar, and pronounced it somewhat "rococo." My stepmother looked at my dress, and pronounced this also somewhat "rococo." With that I started the idea, that my person itself might be somewhat "rococo," which was negatived with the greatest and the most courteous zeal.

My stepmother said I was exactly at the handsome, "modern age," for a charming woman; in one word, "*la femme la trente ans, la femme de Balzac*;" and added various things half unexpressed, but yet perfectly intelligible; as that I had grown handsomer, in my complexion, in my eyes, in my hands; and all this, to me, poor daughter of Eve, was a great happiness to hear.

Selma was resolute about taking my toilet in hand herself, in order to make "this also" modern! I promised to submit myself to her tyranny.

After breakfast, my stepmother and I continued the conversation *tête-à-tête*; and I remarked during this that her countenance had considerably altered, and I saw a something uneasy and excited in her looks, which I had not observed before. Yet her features had not lost their noble beauty. Whilst we talked, Selma watered her flowers, and sang the while charmingly. The eyes of my stepmother turned often towards her, as if towards their light.

Flora was in a changeful humour. Now she opened a book, and now threw it from her; now she seated herself at the piano, and played something with great skill, but left off in the middle of the piece; now arranged her curls, and looked at herself in the mirror; at length she seated herself at the window; and made observations on the passers by. I called her secretly "Miss Caprice."

Thus stood affairs in our drawing-room, when, in a pause of the conversation, we heard a faint hissing whistling, and slow steps approaching the room where we sate.

My stepmother cast an uneasy glance towards the door. Selma's song ceased, Flora looked quietly from the window, and upon—St. Orme, who entered the room. He and I were now formally introduced to each other. The repulsive impression which he had made upon me was not diminished by the shake of his hand. I receive an especial impression

of a person by the manner of taking the hand, and cannot avoid drawing deductions therefrom—more, however, by instinct than by reason, since my reason refuses to be led by outward impressions, which may be merely accidental; but I cannot alter it: a cordial warm shake of the hand takes—my heart; a feeble or imperfect, or cold, one repels it. There are people who press the hand so that it is painful for a good while afterwards; there are also those who come with two fingers; from these defend us! . . .

But again to the Envoyé whose hand-shake, weak and sharp, although the hand was soft, did not please me. He went from me to Flora, whose hand he kissed; he wished then to put his arm confidentially round Selma's waist, but she escaped from him, and called to me to come and make acquaintance with her flower-bulbs, which she merrily introduced to me under the names of "King Hiskia," "Lord Wellington," "Grand Vainqueur," "l'Ami du Cœur," "Diana," "Galatæa," and so on:—flower-genii hidden in the bulbs, which we rejoiced to see unfolding in the winter sun.

We were here interrupted by Flora's brother, Felix Delphin, who gave to Selma a half-blown monthly rose. She took it blushing. Aha, my young sister! But I know not whether I shall bestow thee on the young Delphin. His remarkably handsome and good face has a certain unpleasant expression which tells of an irregular life.

The Envoyé said something in a low voice softly to my stepmother which made her change colour, and with an uneasy look, rise up and go with him into her room.

I left the young merry trio employed in propositions and schemes for the pleasures of the day and of the week, and went up into my own room. It had a glorious prospect—my room, and afforded me an opportunity of observing, in a free and extended heaven, the play of light and shadow of clouds, and of azure blue, which gives so much life and animation to the firmament above our heads.

We live upon Blasieholm, exactly upon the limits of the fields planted with trees, where the Delagarde Palace, with its towers, stood aloft for centuries, and was burnt down in one night. I look out from my window, and see and hear the roaring of the broad stream which separates the city from Norrmalm, and on whose shores have

been fought so many bloody battles; on the haven, the bridge of boats, the royal castle, with the Lion Hill; the river promenade, further on, beneath the north-bridge; and on the other side of the island of the Holy Ghost, the blue water of the Mälar, and the southern mountains. From among the masses of houses upon the different islands, raise themselves the bold spires of the church-towers. To the left I have that of St. Catharine; to the right, that of St. James; and further off, the royal gardens, with their rich alleys, and—I should never come to an end, were I to name all that I have and govern—from my window. And in my chamber, I have my pencils, my books, and——myself.

The 5th.

I have looked about me in the family, at least as far as regards the outside of people. Because rightly to decide between minds, and to pass through the outward into the actual being, requires more time. My silent question addressed to every one for this purpose is, "What wilt thou, what seekest thou in life?" According to this rule, I botanise among human souls, and classify them.

"You must see Flora's paintings! You must hear Flora sing! You must see and hear Flora play in comedy! Flora must show you her poetical and prose descriptions and portraits! they are so witty, so droll!" Thus I have often heard Selma say for some days; and she did not rest till I had seen and admired all—and I have admired them with great pleasure, for Flora's turn for the arts is in many ways distinguished. But greater still, I fear, is her self-love, or what do expressions like the following denote:

"I am not like common people; if I were like others, so and so, but I am really quite peculiar and remarkable, I cannot lower myself to the point of sight of these every-day figures," and more of the kind.

So seems with Flora the chief person to be an *I*, with Selma a *thou*. Yet I will not too hastily judge Flora.

Selma furnished me with a most agreeable morning yesterday, by allowing me to make acquaintance with several masterpieces in her beautiful collection of pictures. They were presents to her from her father, who collected them himself during his residence in Italy. By the accurate

knowledge of the spirit of the various colouring, by the pure and severe sense of beauty, one recognised the scholar of Ehrensvärd. In the mean time, the conversation turned on Selma's own residence in Rome. After Virginia's death she accompanied her parents thither, who in this journey sought for the dissipation of their sorrow and an occasion of more highly accomplishing their beloved daughter. Here had Selma awoke to a consciousness of the beauty of life, and also to that of its pain, for here she had lost her adored father. Lennartson was then in Rome, had partaken with her happier days, and became in grief her support and consolation. With filial and brotherly tenderness he attached himself to the two mourning ladies, and conducted them, under his own faithful care, back to their native land. Selma spoke with deep emotion of all that which he had been to them.

Towards evening came St. Orme and the young Delphin. St. Orme made Flora a present of a beautiful bracelet, over which she exhibited great delight, and allowed St. Orme himself to clasp it on her arm. After this, he held it forth and kissed it, and Flora—permitted it. Selma saw this with a disturbed look, and blushed.

We divided ourselves this evening into three parties. Felix and Selma threw the feather-ball, and acted a comedy in the farthest drawing-room, and their jokes and her silver-ringing laughter came thence to us; Flora allowed the firework of her wit to blaze before the Envoyé, who animated it by his satire, whilst he evidently ruled her and guided the conversation, which amused me, although I did not understand the frequent secret hints in it, and the vexation which these seemed sometimes to excite in Flora.

My stepmother permitted her lights to shine before me, and instructed me on the positions of the relationship in the state. I allowed myself to be edified, lent my two ears towards three sides, and made now and then one and another wise remark on my stepmother's views, as I with Sibylline solemnity laid my cards in order to read the book of fate. For I should be no worthy daughter of the home of the magic arts, Finland, if I had not been somewhat skilled in the prophetic lore of coffee and cards. True it is that I never was an altogether worthy scholar of the celebrated

soothsayeress, Liboria, who had taught me her art; and I have never yet laid the cards with her devotion and her spirit, but——short and good, it amused me to see the play of fate in the cards, and I have often amused myself and others by it, and I did so also at this time.

When the evening was ended, the company separated, and Flora and I went through the little corridor towards our sleeping-rooms, which were separated by it; Flora remained standing, and said, as she suddenly turned herself towards me:

“You think certainly that I am in love with St. Orme.”

“Hm!” answered I, “I think it looks rather like it.”

(For Flora this evening had really coquetted with St. Orme.)

“And know you not, wise Sibyl, that appearance often deceives? And so it does now. One must often appear that which one is not, to obtain that which one wishes. Craft and cunning were given to woman, to govern those who would rule her. They are her rightful weapons.”

“So people often say,” I replied, “but I have not found it so. I have found the force of truth and of earnestness—if they be used with prudence and love—alone right powerful, and that in men as in women.”

“Truth and earnestness!” said Flora, scornfully, “show me where they can be found. We altogether cheat one another every day through life, however sanctified our conduct may be. How, for example, is it with us two? Have we not for several days played off the most courteous cousins to each other, and yet I believe that at the bottom we think very little of one another. What is your opinion?”

“I think with you,” said I, animated by this candour.

“Well, then,” continued Flora, “were it not quite as well that we openly assumed our position of hating one another?”

“Why not?” said I, as before; “that would be perhaps an entirely new way to love.”

“Novelty pleases me,” said Flora, laughing too; “thus, then, from this day we are open enemies, and mutually cherish a little hatred. Is it not so, Miss Philosophia?”

“Agreed, Miss Caprice!”

We shook each other's hand laughing, and parted better friends than we had been before.

Notwithstanding Flora's words, I made up this evening, according to my unlooked-for conjectures, two matches, and united Flora and St. Orme, Selma and Felix. There was yet my stepmother and myself to provide for. Good, now! We will become the comfort of each other's age, and will govern the state together. Thorild and Madame de Genlis can help us.

The 6th.

My unlooked-for conjectures are rendered vain; and by whom? By the Baron.

At breakfast, Flora and I declared in a lively way our agreement of the foregoing evening. My stepmother took the affair jestingly, as it appeared, and laughed at our "hatred-contract." Selma looked on the affair, not as a merry one, but regarded us with grave and almost sorrowful eyes. I endeavoured to satisfy her by representing that I would prove our hatred to be a new way to friendship. She became again gay, and singing

A little strife and brawl
Injures not at all,

left us, in order to look after domestic concerns. Soon after this came Baron Lennartson.

After some time of general conversation, he led Flora aside, and talked for a long time to her in a low voice. He seemed to beseech from her something earnestly, and during this seized, more than once, her hand. And Flora appeared not at all to oppose. I looked at my stepmother, and my stepmother looked at me.

"There seems to be quite a friendly understanding between guardian and ward," said I.

"Yes," replied my stepmother, "they are something more to each other than that."

"How! are they betrothed?"

"Yes! but it is not declared, and it will not yet be generally spoken of."

"Flora," continued I, "will next spring be of age, and will then have control over a considerable property."

"Merely over the income of it," said my stepmother; "over the capital, her future husband alone will have control, according to the will of the uncle whom Flora and her brother have to thank for their property. He was a crabbed old man,

and had no confidence in ladies' management of business. He ordered also that Flora should not marry before her five-and-twentieth year—which she completes in the spring—under the disadvantage of losing a considerable part of her property."

Selma entered. Lennartson ended his discourse with Flora, and left, after he had kissed her hand, and had said slowly and emphatically,

"Remember!"

"That was indeed a very warm conversation," said my stepmother somewhat inquiringly to Flora, as she, after a glance at the mirror, approached us with beaming eyes.

"Yes," said Flora, "he is as kind as he is excellent; one must do everything that he wills."

I sighed aloud.

"Now, why does Sophia sigh so?" inquired Flora.

"Because I conjecture that you will be right happy soon with Lennartson, and receive his hand. I must indeed nourish my hatred."

"Oh!" said Flora, laughing, "do not mourn yet. It will not be so well with me," added she, half melancholy. "The talk is now less about me than about Felix. My guardian wishes that I should be for him a prototype, and an example, and a guide—but my influence upon my dear brother is not much to be boasted of; and I well know who, better than I, could work upon him, and could change my dear Felix into a true bird, 'a phoenix,' if she would.—What do you think, Selma?"

Selma turned away, and said, half to herself—"Do not let us talk of it."

"Well, then, let us talk of my masquerade costume," replied Flora with liveliness; "come and help me to choose the colours; you have such good taste." She took Selma by the arm, and the two young cousins chasséed, singing, out of the room.

Somewhat later, when I went into Flora's room with a message to Selma, I found them in eager discourse, amid gold and silver gauze.

"But, Flora, that is too dear!" said Selma.

"But it is so divinely beautiful!" said Flora.

"Yes, it may be beautiful—but the difference in the cost

is so considerable! You have indeed promised Lennartson himself to be an example to Felix."

"Yes, yes, in general, but not in all trifles. In them I will follow my own head. So look, Selma, dear, and do not assume airs of wisdom; they do not become you—be a little livelier. Let us come to my turban.—Ah, aunt! That was divine! My aunt shall say——" and Flora turned herself warmly to my stepmother, who just then came in, and now without hesitation entered into Flora's plans respecting the expensive costume which should change her into a Circassian.

After this she said to me, whilst she embraced Selma, "What think you of this child here, Sophia, who will sit at home by her old mother, instead of going to the masquerade at W.'s?"

"I love her on that account," said I.

"How should Miss Philosophia do otherwise, under such philosophical circumstances?" said Flora, somewhat piqued.

"But if I," continued my stepmother, her eyes sparkling with delight, "take upon myself all cost of the dress, and——"

"That mamma must not do, if mamma loves me," exclaimed Selma. "It is really true, that I have no desire for this ball, and still less to ruin myself for it. My mother, beside, would merely go there on my account, and——one thing with another, I am convinced that I shall be far more pleased if I remain at home this evening."

"Now, you wish to win Lennartson's heart," said Flora, bitterly.

"Flora!" cried Selma, with a look of astonishment and wounded innocence. Her eyes filled with tears.

"Pardon!" besought Flora, and kissed her burning cheek. "I did not mean what I said. That which I really mean is, you deserve him far more than I do."

We now, every one of us, got very deep into dresses and costumes.

The 9th.

Selma has altered my wardrobe, and has tyrannised me to become modern. And I have let myself be tyrannised over, because I see that it gives her and my stepmother so much

pleasure. And my stepmother! she has embarrassed me with her beautiful presents. But she had such evident pleasure in giving, that I could not do otherwise than receive with gratitude.

To-day, in childish pleasure over my mid-day toilet, Selma exclaimed,

"Ah! I would that Balzac saw you. He would directly put you in a novel, and let you awaken at least three deadly passions."

"That may be," said I, "a strong proof of the power of poetical fancy, since, in reality, I should not indeed awaken one passion."

"Um, um, um!" said my stepmother, with a courteously-designed diplomatic mien.

"Neither do I wish it any more," continued I.

"The times of folly are gone for ever,
The days of wisdom are at hand."

"A wisdom," said Flora, "which, perhaps, smacks a little of the wisdom of the fox under the grapes. I, for my part, never believe that a lady does not wish to please and to win hearts, and incense and sacrifice, be she called Cleopatra, or Ninon, or St. Philosophia."

"St. Philosophia may sometimes teach you otherwise," answered I, seriously; and my stepmother, who at times seems somewhat afraid that the hatred between Flora and me may become earnest, hastened to turn the conversation by dinner, during which the merry jokes of Selma put all in good humour. Flora and I said many amusing things about our "hatred-contract," and added many clauses and paragraphs. My stepmother scattered over them laughter and joke. From what I see, I suspect that we are a set of clever people here together, and can make merry with one another.

The 12th.

Our every-day life begins to assume more and more shape before my eyes. A deal of dissipation reigns here, and I am glad that I am withdrawn from it to my own solitary chamber. The two young girls sport away their lives, but with very dissimilar grace.

Flora is perpetually changing, and is for the most part bad tempered. The least adverse occurrence brings on

a storm. Selma, on the contrary, has a golden temper ; her whole being is harmony, and one sees this in her light graceful gait ; one hears it in the joyous song which announces her approach or her presence, here and there in the house ; whilst she now occupies herself in the domestic concerns, now keeps a sort of dancing attendance on her mother, now takes part in all Flora's revolutions, or now cares for the strangers who daily visit the house. The domestics obey her with joy, because she always speaks kindly to them, and her arrangements evince a good and wise understanding. The Philosopher himself glows at the sight of her. In one word, she is the life and sunshine of the house. The only thing that disturbs me in her is an often-recurring satirical humour, which at times—shall I say it—degenerates into malice ? The word is severe, but I think that it is true. But with such gay animal spirits as Selma and Flora have for their daily companions, it is not easy to maintain here also the right tact and the right harmony. And then the pleasure which my stepmother has in everything that awakens life and spices it, and her affection for the young girls, makes her often not observe that they scatter about cayenne pepper instead of harmless salt.

Between me and my stepmother much politeness prevails, although no confidence. I fancy that we are rather afraid of each other. We have commonly an hour's *tête-à-tête* each day, in which we together care for the affairs of the state, and make our "*reflexions chrétiennes et morales*," on the course of time and things. In these, and in all our politenesses, I remark that we secretly strive to enlighten and to convert one another, and also to startle one another with our profound remarks and views. Thus it happens, that while we are trying to set together the state-machine, it sometimes, between us two, is near going to pieces. For, although we both of us maintain that we stand in the most exact "*juste milieu*" of heavenly right, still my stepmother leans considerably to the aristocratic side of the state, just as I towards the democratic. My stepmother, who in her former importance as wife of the District Governor exercised no inconsiderable influence upon the affairs of the government, conceives herself to have not only all the knowledge of experience, but also the skill of a ruler. I, on the contrary, conceive that from my philosophical point of vision, see every-

thing, and understand rather better ; and all this occasions at times a little strife between us, which, however, never becomes violent. Because when my stepmother raises her voice with a " Believe me, my friend,"—I am silent, and amuse myself by assuming a disbelieving air ; and although I also put myself in opposition, I still let my stepmother always have the last word or tone, namely, the diplomatic, " Um, um, um !"

In the evening the family, however, is mostly at home (they say that in the New-Year this will be different) ; and Felix Delphin, St. Orme, and Lennartson, often join it. I see plainly that the Baron has directed an inquiring glance upon Flora and St. Orme. It seems to me often that his eyes turn from the brilliant effect-seeking Flora to Selma, and rest upon her with a certain tender observation ; and she—why are her eyes in his presence so continually shaded by the long dark eyelashes ? Why hears one nothing of those gay sallies, of those sagacious and fine observations, which otherwise are peculiar to her ? Yet Flora would of a truth not endure it. I have seen this in one and another pointed jealous glance which has flashed from her eyes. But I also have received my share in this glance when Lennartson has given me any considerable portion of his attention, which, I say it with pleasure, not seldom happens.

The Baron—no ! No description of him. Bulwer, who has thrown so many deep glances into the nobler class of the female mind, observes with justice, how indifferent to them is the beauty or plainness of a man. It is the impression of the character in demeanour, gestures, and words, which fetter or repel. Thus, not a word about the Baron's height, size, hair, teeth, and so on. Neither should I have much to say on the subject ; but I know this, that the impression of his personal appearance is such that one does not forget it, and never can. One feels, as it were, exalted by it, and his glance—yes, of that I must say one word.

There are eyes, in which one looks as it were into a brightened world—so must the eyes of Schelling be, and therefore I wish, for once, to be able to look into them ;—there is also a glance which I call especially the glance of the statesmen. Some one has said, " Philosophers see more light than shapes ;" and I say, " Most others see more shapes than light ;" but the true statesman sees at the same

time the shapes of life, and sees them in the true light of life. His glance is at the same time bright and distinct. Such is Lennartson's glance, and one soon sees that sun and lightning can speak from it.

I am glad to have seen and known this man.

St. Orme presents beside him a decided contrast, although he also has a distinguished exterior, and is rich in knowledge, wit, and experience of life. But he wants a something in his being, a something which ennobles the whole. He inspires no confidence, no esteem. Besides this, he has a certain uneasy activity in his arms and fingers, which reminds one of a spindle, and makes him, at least to me, disagreeable.

How may I understand the way in which Flora acts towards these two men? It seems to me certain that she loves the Baron; but why then coquet with St. Orme? Why accept presents from him?

A guest, who also begins to present himself here more frequently, is "the rich old bachelor," my uncle. He is tolerably agreeable and entertaining; and if I might not fear being proud, I might believe that his visits had reference to—me.

He sees in me perhaps a "*passable souper*." My step-mother begins to give me one and another well-meant little hint on the subject; I pretend that I understand nothing about it.

Among the frequent guests here are the two sisters Von P., Mrs. and Miss, commonly called here the Lady Councilors of Commerce, who drive an important trade in the city with the phrases "they say," "they think," "they know." To us this is somewhat ridiculous; but yet we are no despisers of the commerce which we laugh at, for both sisters know a vast many people, and the unmarried lady is a wide-awake person, whose great, peering eyes see very sharply and correctly, and whose tongue is more amusing than keen. She has above ninety cousins, all on the side of the ladies, as she told us the other day.

The 14th.

Yesterday evening I made the acquaintance of "our nearest," as Selma calls the circle of the most intimate friends

of the house, in contradistinction to "our remotest." When I, as usual, towards half-past seven, came down into the room of my stepmother, I saw Signora Luna sitting in one corner of the sofa, but evidently in the wane, as Selma also whispered when she introduced me to her. The beautiful Countess saluted me somewhat coolly, yet I was pleased with the pressure of her warm, silky-soft hand.

The rest of the company consisted of Baron Alexander G., a young lieutenant, Åke Sparrsköld; a sister of Flora's, a widow, and ten years older than herself; the Baroness Bella P., whom we call "the Beauty," and whose features are of the first class, but in expression only of the second; of the handsome old lady Mrs. Rittersvärd, and her daughter Hellfrid; and of St. Orme and Lennartson.

They spoke of a now greatly-admired French romance which St. Orme had lent to Flora. St. Orme extolled the strength of the characters, and the boldness and pomp of its colouring. The young Sparrsköld considered the last to be false, and in the first he found an exaggeration which robbed them of all strength. Every human effort immediately mounted up to insanity, and lost as well proportion as design; even virtue could not appear sublime, without being placed on stilts and becoming unnatural. And the object of the actions! Always merely private, contracted motives, always self, selfish, isolated happiness; never an endeavour, an interest, which embraced the great interests of humanity. And these faults he believed were to be found in the whole of the new French literature.

Lennartson agreed warmly in this; "And the aim of this literature," said he, "is not merely false in itself. It is untrue as a chronometer, and libels the nobler and, one may say, the UNIVERSAL SPIRIT of the times—the spirit which places individual efforts and individual well-being in the most complete connexion with the universal good. In regard to this feeling towards the UNIVERSAL, towards the WHOLE, the present young France might go to the school of the old Rousseau. With all their faults, still his romances are, to a great degree, models for pictures of this kind of citizen social life. See how here the individuals represent the chief varieties of mankind; and how, when they

embrace one another in love, this love stiffens not into egotism, but expands itself, to embrace the most sacred institutions of the citizen social life, the life of humanity and of nature in its divine existence, and domestic life steps forth, as it must do, as the point from which the great life of the world will be sanctified and blessed."

St. Orme shrugged his shoulders. "Poor Rousseau! With all his ideal romances he was merely—a fanatic!" said he, and went to join Baron Alexander in the great drawing-room.

"I feel that you have right on your side," said I to Lennartson, "but—still I would so willingly see an actual advance, a step forward on the path of development—and it cannot be denied that this French literature presents characters and situations of a variety and depth such as the world has never before seen; it presses into every corner of social existence—its every moment of suffering, darkness, and dissonance: this is probably only a descent into hell, but—must not an ascent into heaven be near? a change in which life's deepest night shall be illumined by its most beautiful morning? Is it indeed possible that the highest point of this literature shall be only—a return to Rousseau?"

"Yes," replied Lennartson, smiling at my zeal, "but as I just observed, merely as concerns the looking to, the feeling FOR THE WHOLE, the universal. I see, like you, in this literature, a decidedly new development, and it is not the first time that the people who exhibited this have broken up new paths for the world. But it is yet merely fragmentary; it contains studies for a great composition. And some day certainly will the master step forward who will arrange these chaotic creations into a harmonious world. Yet—perhaps, the model for this must first present itself in actual life."

"How do you mean?" asked I, excited.

"Permit me," continued Lennartson, "to direct your attention to the principal feature in the better, beautiful literature of our time—namely, to its tendency—that of presenting woman as the point in life from which animating, renovating strength proceeds. And I confess that I agree with it. I expect at this period of the world much—from woman."

That the female auditorium, before whom the Baron spoke these words, looked up to him with pleasure and acknowledgment, was merely natural. A modest joy glowed in Selma's beautiful eyes, whilst from the flashing eyes of Flora broke forth something which I might call—great.

My stepmother now made the move that we should go into the saloon and hear some music. We followed her.

Flora called Lennartson to the piano, and sung and played bewitchingly for him ; at intervals they talked in a low voice.

I attached myself to Hellfrid Rittersvård and Lieutenant Sparrsköld, who, with his honest countenance and his frank way of acting and speaking, pleased me particularly. "The Beauty" joined herself to us, and seemed to wish to make a deathless impression upon Åke Sparrsköld, but he seemed for the present, like myself, to be more taken with Miss Rittersvård.

When I see a young lady who is as ugly as Miss Hellfrid Rittersvård, and at the same time has so tranquil a manner, and so pleasing and happy a way of acting and speaking, I form a very high opinion of her. I feel that some way a high consciousness exalts her above all the petty miseries of weakness ; she has a full confidence in the nobility within herself and in her fellow-beings, and calls forth thereby their esteem and every sound feeling, which easily vanquishes all outward troubles. I found Hellfrid's conversation piquant and animating, and I fancy that Sparrsköld found it so too, although "the Beauty" exercised upon him her power of attraction.

My stepmother played piquet with her good friend Mrs. Rittersvård. This amiable old lady suffers from a nervous affection of the head, and is come to Stockholm to consult the physicians there on the subject. Her daughter obtains the means needful for this by her translations of foreign works, and also assists thereby in providing for two younger brothers. Well deserves she the name in earnest of "Miss Estimable," which Flora gives to her half in jest.

Selma was here and there in the company, and took a friendly part in everything that went forward.

St. Örme played cards with Baron Alexander and Felix Delphin, but he often from his cards threw sharp glances upon Flora and Lennartson, who, at the piano, had for-

gotten the music for a low but earnest conversation. This was suddenly interrupted by St. Orme, who exclaimed :

"Flora! my best Flora! bestow upon me one quarter of a thought. I am to-night an unlucky player; come to my help with a piece of good advice. Tell me in which colour shall I play. . . . In black or red?"

"Black," answered Flora.

"Black!" repeated St. Orme, "why do you not rather red? Red is your favourite colour—crimson *red*—is it not? or does my memory deceive me?"

"I do not remember!" said Flora, with apparent indifference, as she rose, and a deep crimson glowed upon her cheek.

"But I remember it, I!" returned St. Orme. "Crimson is your colour, and therefore—gentlemen! Six in hearts. This game I hope to win," continued he, nodding to Flora, who suddenly went out. She soon returned; but her joyous mood was gone, and her cheerfulness for the remainder of the evening was constrained.

As St. Orme went away, I heard him say to Flora, half insultingly, "Thanks for your council, dear cousin! I won my game! and with your colour upon my heart, I hope to win it also in the future."

"Don't be too certain of that!" said Flora, out of humour.

"Defy me not!" said St. Orme, slowly, half in jest, half in warning earnestness; and he seized her resisting hand, kissed it, and bowed smiling to her.

What may that portend?

The 16th.

I went out to-day far and alone, and enjoyed myself with my own thoughts. Returned home, I found visitors, and among them the Chamberlain. I saw certain strange telegraphic signs between my stepmother and him.

Flora lives only in her costume, and in her thoughts of the ball at Minister ——'s. What weariness for—an evening!

Many projects for balls and other pleasures. I, for my part, say "No!" to all of them. I say that I am too old to dance.

"Um, um, um!" says my stepmother, politely dissenting.

I think, however, of being present at the New-Year's

assembly, because I there shall see the royal family more nearly.

The 17th.

Noble flowers have nectaries, honey-containers, in which the noblest juices of the plant are preserved. But to come at these, one must sometimes—if one has not the genius of a bee, or of Hummel, but has merely unskilful human fingers—one must sometimes wound the flower. The human soul has also its nectaries, which we must often handle as we do the flowers.

The occasion for these reflections is the following:—I found Selma and Flora, as well as my stepmother, occupied by reviewing the acquaintance and friends of the house. They were severe, and most of them were treated without mercy or forbearance.

Flora was the most bitter, but Selma soon followed her example. My stepmother laughed a deal at their mimicry and their caricatures. I also began to laugh, for the satire was strikingly witty; but when a couple of good, estimable people, and whom the young girls loved with their whole hearts, were handled without remorse, I felt myself wounded, and was troubled at all the poison which these young human flowers, as it were, breathed forth.

I availed myself of a moment, when my stepmother was out of the room, to tell them, affectionately, how deeply I felt this.

Both blushed; and Flora said, "I could very well see by your silence that you were thinking about reading us this lecture. But, my best Philosophia, if you will preach, do it in a Finland church, but not in the saloons of Stockholm, where you will convert nobody. It is here as everywhere in the great world, '*tous les genres sont bons, hors le genre ennuyeux*.' Besides this, when people are young they must amuse themselves and laugh. It is time enough to be grave and silent when years of wisdom come. And when we shall be old maids, then we shall be perhaps as moral and virtuous as you."

I was silent; for what was the use of replying to words like these? and when my stepmother returned I went out softly, and to my own room. I was inwardly uneasy. Selma is not that which I fancied, thought I, and looked up to the

beaming stars, which in the evening twilight began to peep forth from the deep blue, and thought of the stars which I had seen beaming in her eyes, and mourned sincerely over their becoming dimmed.

But I had not been long alone, when I heard light footsteps springing up-stairs. My door opened, and——Selma threw herself into my arms, and said,

“Are you very angry with me?”

“No, not now, my sweet Selma!” said I, affected by her heartfelt manner.

“But you have been angry, you have been dissatisfied with me, and that certainly more than once. Is it not so?”

I assented. I told her how I feared that Flora might mislead her to an unworthy passion for censure and severity, and how it grieved me to see dark specks in her soul. I spoke earnestly of that blameable sharp-sightedness to little things, which blinded the mind to what was great and conciliatory; of the disposition of mind which led us to depreciate others in order to exalt ourselves. I became severer than I had wished to be, and pronounced this judgment to be self-righteousness and phariseeism. Selma listened to me in silence, and became more and more grave and pale.

“You are right!” at length she said; “you are certainly quite right. Ah! I have reflected so little upon myself; till now I have given so little heed to myself.—Everybody has been so kind to me, has in fact spoiled me. But do you tell me of my faults, Sophia! I will alter, I will improve myself!”

“But you must not weep, Selma.”

“And what matters it if I weep? Tears truly must wash away the hateful spots from my soul. Be not afraid for me, and spare me not, Sophia. Tell me always the truth, as long as you consider me worthy of hearing it.”

I embraced the affectionate girl warmly, and told her how happy she made me.

We talked now calmly of the difficulties of a true middle-path along the field of social criticism. I admitted the difficulty of finding it; and that although I watched over myself, I had often to reproach myself with sins of the tongue. An affectionate tone of mind, which regarded more the intrinsic than the accidental in man, would be the safest

guide to this. And for the rest, the more experienced, and the more prudent we were, should we, all the more, find better subjects for our sharp-sightedness than the shortcomings of our neighbours.

"You speak of something," said Selma, "which I for some time have dimly felt. Since the death of my father and teacher, I am, I fear, slid backwards in many things. I know not how it is now;—but my days are trifled away in nothing!—I often feel an emptiness—I fear that I am deteriorated.—Ah! thank you, Sophia, that you have awoke me to it. But help me now again into the right way. Help me to occupy myself with that which makes wiser and better. You are indeed my elder sister! Be now also my friend!"

How willingly will I be so. We now projected together a new arrangement of life; we laid our plans for the future, and continued our conversation long; and thus I was permitted to see a soul which is capable of the noblest perfection.

That which had begun so gravely, ended, however, jocosely; I promised, as an equivalent for Selma's instruction in singing and Italian, to teach her Finnish; she promised in return to exercise my patience severely, because she never would understand Finnish.

When Selma had left me at the call of her mother, I felt that I loved her, and that truly for the whole of my life. Never, never shall I forget how she stood before me, and said:

"What matters it if I weep? Tell me always the truth; I will correct, I will improve myself." And the quiet tears in the noble, soul-beaming countenance—I wish that Lennartson had seen and heard her. Oh, there are still beautiful things on earth!

The 19th.

Selma was right in her prophesy. The masquerade evening was to us home-tarriers a far pleasanter evening than if we had figured in the most magnificent parts.

Whilst Selma gave the finishing touches to Flora's toilet, I went down to my stepmother, and found Felix, the Viking, and the Baron with her.

The latter was not very talkative, and often turned his eyes towards the door.

When Flora, attended by Selma, entered in her magnificent

costume, he seemed struck by her beauty. I was struck to that degree, that I could not withhold an exclamation of surprise and rapture. We were all delighted; and Selma's beaming eyes wandered beseechingly around to solicit honour and incense for the beautiful Circassian, who stood there in proud consciousness of her youth, her beauty, and her splendour. Lennartson's admiration, however, quickly cooled; his glance became serious; and when St. Orme entered in an ornamental Turkish dress—he and Flora were to dance together in a quadrille—he suddenly vanished, without taking leave of any one.

Flora's countenance plainly showed an expression of disquiet; but it soon vanished, and she smiled with pleasure as the Envoyé, with well-selected Oriental compliments, conducted her to the carriage, where her sister awaited her, to drive to the ball. The Viking remained with us, and so did Felix, although he was to have been at the masquerade.

We spoke of Baron Lennartson; and I expressed my delight in the strong feeling for the worth of woman and for her usefulness, which he had acknowledged a few evenings before. The Viking said: "There is no one who thinks more highly of woman; and no one also who is severer in his requirements from her than he. The admiration and love which his mother inspired him with, seem to have laid the foundation of this."

My questions drew forth many relations of the childhood and youth of the Baron, which I have assembled in the following picture.

Lennartson's father, General Lennartson, was a man of violent temper and dissolute life. All care for the children and their education devolved upon the mother; a noble, highly accomplished lady, but of feeble health.

The eldest son, our Lennartson, was in his youth of a delicate constitution and irritable temperament. The mother dedicated to him the greatest attention; not an effeminating, but a tenderly cherishing care, which makes strong in love. By the bed of the boy the quiet mother often sate, and related or read aloud to him histories of men who surmounted the infirmities of the body by the strength of the soul and the will, and who became the glory and the benefactors of their

nation. She especially dwelt upon the great men of his fatherland; those strong-minded and pious men, who, by the union of these qualities, laid the foundation of the character of the Swedish people when this is true to itself.

The boy listened attentively; his breast expanded to great thoughts; and the soul, nourished by the marrow of heroism, soon raised up the weaker body, which also was strengthened by useful exercises. At the age of fifteen, Lennartson excelled most of his companions in agility and strength of body. The mother soon saw the affectionate spirit of her son break forth in its whole strength, but with dangerous propensities likewise. The young Lennartson had, like his father, a violent and inflexible temper. His father's severity towards his mother excited him in the highest degree; and this gave occasion to scenes between father and son which unsettled the weak health of the mother, but—strange enough—destroyed also the rude power of the father. He became, as it were, afraid of his son; afraid, at least, in all things which concerned the mother, and no longer dared to offend against her. This St. John-like nature had brought up an eagle; and this eagle now spread its wings defendingly over her. Happy in the love of her son, but terrified also at the almost fearful temper which she saw break forth in him, she wished to teach this young power to govern itself; and sought to strengthen him in that which alone gives all power its truth, its proportion, and its right direction; namely, in the true fear of God. She had early permitted the great figures of humanity to stand forward before the eye of the child. Now she endeavoured that the inquiring understanding of the young man should acquire a clear conception of the reality of life, and of the doctrine which had cradled in unconscious love the heart of the child. For this end she went to work in quite another way to most parents and teachers. Instead of removing books, which are looked upon as dangerous to piety, she brought these forward. She read with her young son the works of the most renowned atheists and deists, from the oldest times to the present day, and let his reason exercise itself in comparing their doctrines with the doctrine in which a personally revealed God gives a complete solution of the enigma of life, as well as in this revelation of His will and His being, the

only secure, wholly-efficient guarantee for the fulfilment of man's deepest longing, his holiest hope on earth.

She allowed him in this way to surround himself with perfect difficulties, and, as it were by his own strength, open the way to the innermost centre of life. She it was who brought forward objections founded upon the doctrines of the Naturalists; he it was who answered them. But the joy which beamed from the eyes of the mother at the happily solved difficulties, probably enlightened, secretly, the inquiring mind of the son.

And while she thus conducted him to an independent and firm state of mind, she taught him to esteem his opponent, to value all honest inquiry and sincere opinion, and to acknowledge the germs of truth even in immature doctrines.

Lennartson often spoke of this as the happiest and richest period of his life. His mother's affectionate glance and approving word were his dearest reward. She caressed him but very rarely, although he often fell upon his knees before her in fanatical reverence, and kissed her hands and her dress. Only occasionally in those moments, when she remarked that the young heart was too violently consumed by a desire for reciprocation, did she allow his glowing cheek to repose on the breast which only beat for him, and which already bore the seed of death in a cruel and generally incurable malady.

She carefully concealed from her son the pangs by which she had been wasted for many years. Nor was it until an operation was necessary that Lennartson became aware of the sufferings and the danger of his mother. She wished him to be absent during her hours of agony, and sought by an innocent guile to deceive him as to the time. But he was not to be deceived; he would not allow himself to be sent away. His arms sustained her in the painful trial; her eyes rested during it upon him, and for his sake she bore all without the slightest complaint.

And she was able to live yet three years for his sake; yet three years to be happy through him. The malady then returned incurably. Whilst she spoke of immortality and the certainty of seeing him again, while she besought him to have "patience with his father," she departed in his arms.

The effect of this loss upon the youth of eighteen was terrible, and matured him early to manhood. His tone of

mind at this time, and his love for the studies in which he had early found such pleasure, determined him secretly to enter the clerical profession, and his studies at the University, like the studies of the greatest statesman of Sweden especially—were theological. In these studies he was—like Axel Oxenstjerna—interrupted, in order, according to the will of his father, that he might travel abroad. As Secretary to the Swedish embassy, he was sent to Vienna.

The success which he had here, and the talents which he exhibited, determined his future destiny, according to the wishes of his father; and he has now shown, as statesman, that he deserves the esteem and the confidence of all.

After my stepmother and the Viking had alternately given this account of Lennartson's life, Selma reminded me, the first evening I saw him here, that I had spoken of having already made his acquaintance many years before, and I was now requested to relate how and where; which I did in the following manner:

About fifteen years ago, I was at a dinner party, at which were present General Lennartson and his son. The company was large, and consisted for the most part of the connexions and acquaintance of the General. Merely a corner of the table separated me from young Lennartson. The distinguished young man was good enough to busy himself about me, at that time a bashful girl of fourteen, and related to me the story of Schiller's "Wallenstein," which made me forget both eating and drinking. During the meal-time, the general conversation was of a disturbance which had taken place in the military academy, and a young man was mentioned, who, having taken an active part in it, had made himself amenable to the laws of the academy, and in consequence was expelled. Some of the guests were very violent against the young man; called him "gallow's bird," and so on.

Young Lennartson undertook alone his defence, and grew warm on the subject; he showed how, in the last instance, he had been provoked by a former insult into the existing quarrel, and how even his errors bore traces of a noble heart. The General took up the affair against his son, and became ever more violent against the accused. Young Lennartson continued to defend him too even against his father with great respect, but with great determination. All

at once the General became, as it were, insane, and turned himself personally against his son, with an outburst of rudeness and the most violent accusations.

From the moment in which the father's attack was directed against himself, the son became wholly silent. It is true that his cheeks and his lips grew somewhat paler; but his glance at his father was so firm, his whole bearing so calm, that one might almost have believed him insensible to his father's unworthy behaviour. Whilst all eyes were directed with deep anxiety on both father and son, mine dwelt with a feeling of admiration upon the noble countenance of the latter. Involuntarily they riveted themselves upon a small gleaming speck on the white, youthful, polished forehead, which became larger and more shining, and at length down rolled a clear sweat-drop, to conceal itself in the dark eyebrow. This was all which betrayed the struggle within himself. The General at length paused from want of words and breath, and for a moment all was as still as death at the table. Young Lennartson was as silent as the rest; no affectation of indifference or defiance disfigured his noble countenance. He seemed to me worthy of admiration on account of his perfect self-government, and many seemed to share this impression with me. Every one, however, was desirous by general conversation to throw off the painful excitement. Young Lennartson also took part in it without constraint, but he was more grave than before—the end of Wallenstein I did not hear.

“Do you remember,” inquired the Viking from me, “the name of the young man whose great deeds gave occasion to this scene?”

“No—the name I have forgotten, or else did not hear.” But I mentioned some facts which I remembered as being spoken of, and which showed him to be a restless and powerful character.

“And that, then, was the first thing which you heard about ME!” said the Viking, softly, but emphatically.

I looked at him with surprise; his eyes were directed to me with a troubled earnestness, and I read in them such dark remembrances, that I quickly withdrew mine, vexed and almost full of remorse for having awakened them.

My stepmother remarked significantly, “Lennartson is in

truth a rare character, and I wish that all young men would take him for an example."

"Yes, who does not wish to resemble him?" exclaimed Felix Delphin, who seemed to take the moral to himself. "Ah! if he were only—how shall I say it?—a little less superior. But he stands so high, that one hardly dare look up to him. He is—too free from faults."

"Without faults Lennartson is not, any more than other mortals," said Brenner; "but they are such faults as belong to great natures. In the mean time they prevent him from being happy."

"Is he not happy?" exclaimed Selma, and looked up with a troubled and astonished glance.

"He is not happy," said Brenner, "because he is so seldom satisfied with himself. He has an insatiable thirst which consumes him."

"And what thirst?" asked I.

"The thirst after perfection."

We were all silent a moment. Brenner's word and tone had awakened something great within us. At length said Felix:

"It is precisely this greatness in him which bows down and humiliates characters less gifted. He overawes more than he exalts. For my part, I confess that I admire him, at the same time that I fear him."

"And yet, Felix," said Selma, "you know that he is very kind."

"Yes, when I deserve it, Selma. And, there it is! I do not often deserve it, and then—Ah! how often, when I was with him, when I heard him, when I saw him act, I have despised myself, because I was so unlike him! And I have then made the best resolutions. But when I come out again into the world I forget myself and him, and do as other fools do, and then—I am afraid of him—and of his glance, because it speaks for my conscience, and—condemns me."

Selma extended her hand to her cousin, and looked at him with bright, tearful eyes. Young Delphin was evidently affected, seized the offered hand, kissed it vehemently many times, and hastened away.

It is impossible that Selma can be indifferent towards this

amiable young man. Soon afterwards the Viking left us also, with his gloomy thoughts.

When we were alone, my stepmother gave me the following account of the Viking:

Wilhelm Brenner, in his childhood, was remarkable for his good heart and his unquiet head. In the military academy he was universally beloved, at the same time that his pranks and his disorderly conduct involved him in quarrels, and drew upon him many annoyances. He was without stability, and was impelled by the suggestions of the moment. Various acts of insubordination drew upon him the severity of the law; this he met with obstinacy and defiance, and he was, in the end, expelled from Carlberg. His connexions, provoked by his behaviour, received him with a sternness and depreciation which completely irritated the passionate soul of Brenner. He looked upon himself as dishonoured by the whole world; saw the future closed against him; and, in order to deaden his despair, plunged into still wilder excesses. When he had run through all that he possessed, and saw himself in debt beyond his power of payment, he turned his destructive hand against his own life. But a preventing hand was laid upon his, and he was withheld from the brink of the abyss; he who withheld him was Thorsten Lennartson. He caused light to ascend into the darkened soul of Brenner. He showed to him the future yet open; he let him feel that he had his own fate yet in his hands; that he might again obtain the esteem of social life, and the peace of his own conscience.

But not merely by words did Lennartson lay a guiding hand upon the fate of Brenner. It was at the time when France made war on the States of Barbary. Lennartson induced Brenner's connexions to allow him to take part in this campaign, and fitted him out at his own expense, though at that time he was anything but rich. Lennartson had rightly judged of his friend; by this means he accomplished his salvation.

In strong natures there is only one step between despair and heroism. With a lock of Lennartson's hair upon his breast, and his image deeply stamped upon his soul, the young Brenner plunged forward upon a path on which dangers of every kind called him forth to combat. To him,

there was more than the conquering of people and kingdoms: to *him*, there was the winning again of honour; the winning again the esteem of himself, of his friends, and of his fatherland. And with the most joyful mad-bravery, he ventured his life for that purpose. The young Swede divided dangers and laurels with the Frenchmen. And upon the wild sea waves, in battle before the walls of Algiers, in combats with Arabs and Kabyles on the soil of Africa, the French learned highly to esteem a bravery equal to their own (a greater is impossible), and to love a humanity towards vanquished foes, with which they are not so well acquainted.

Afterwards, Brenner accompanied some learned Frenchmen on their dangerous journey into the interior of Africa; nor was it until after an absence of nearly seven years that he again saw his native land. He was now met by honour and esteem. He soon found an opportunity of signalling himself as a sea-officer, and was quickly advanced in the service.

The first use which Brenner made of the money that he obtained in service was the payment of his debts at home. When he returned, he was no longer in debt—no! neither in money nor property. But one debt had he yet upon his soul, and this he longed to pay. He had left behind him during his absence a poor girl of noble mind, and of humble, though honest birth, whom he loved passionately, and who loved him equally as well. He swore solemnly to return to her, and to make her his wife. Years, however, went on. Only seldom flew a dove from burning Africa to misty Europe, to console the solitary heart. Poverty, care, and sickness changed in the saddest manner the young blooming maiden. She knew it; was frightened at herself; and like the sick bird, which finds out a dark place in the wood in which to die, so did she retire far from the world, and determined to die for him whom she loved!

He sought her out, however, and found her. But he scarcely could have recognised her. He knew merely by the tone which at sight of him broke forth in her voice and in her look, that she was the same, and that she was true to him. He pressed her to his breast! he seized her hand in order to lead her to the altar. But she refused. Ah! she was so withered, so poor, so joyless. She should only en-

cumber his life ; should only follow him like a shadow upon his sun-brightened path of life. She would rather remain in her obscurity. She could, notwithstanding, gladden herself in its shade with the beams which surrounded him.

Thus spoke she in the earnestness of a pure heart ; and whilst he read this heart, she became to him yet dearer than ever. He talked to her of accompanying him to lands of a more beautiful climate ; talked to her of new flowers on foreign, lovely shores ; of the fresh winds and fresh waves of the sea ; of dangers which they could share with each other ; of burdens which she could lighten to him ; of the omnipotence of love ; of a new life. She listened to him ; his words passed through her soul like renovating life ! Life bloomed anew in her heart ; she believed, and followed him.

And upon her cheeks, which sickness had paled, Brenner impressed his kisses. She breathed the fresh sea air. They bloomed again. When, after an absence of two years in foreign countries, he came back with his wife, she bloomed with health and happiness.

On the occasion of Brenner's marriage were heard many voices of disapproval and opposition ; others also raised themselves approvingly, and no one's was warmer than that of Lennartson.

He and Brenner were from this time inseparable in their lives-interests, and they continue to love one another as brothers very seldom do love.

" Why have I not seen Brenner's wife here ?" I asked from my stepmother, affected by the relation which I had heard.

" Why ?" replied my stepmother, smiling, and rather astonished, " for a very good reason. She has been dead three years. The birth of her youngest child cost her her life."

I sat there somewhat surprised, and almost shocked. My stepmother spoke of the beautiful qualities of the late deceased, and rather prided herself that she (my stepmother) had taken her under her wing and introduced her into society, in which she otherwise would not easily have gained admittance, on which account Brenner always feels and shows an indescribable gratitude, and so on.

I inquired if he had sorrowed much for his wife ?

"Almost to insanity," replied my stepmother. "For nearly a year he could scarcely bear the sight of his children. Now, however, they are his greatest delight. And sweet amiable children are they, three boys and two girls."

It struck twelve during this history, which had awoke the most beneficial feeling in my mind.

The Countess G—— promised to bring Flora home to spend an hour with us herself, and to relate to us the splendours of the ball, if we only would wait for her till three o'clock in the morning and have warm coffee ready. My stepmother, who is charmed with everything lively and gay, promised it; and whilst Selma and I made giant steps in our Christmas-boxes, amid continued conversation about our two heroes, the morning hour came unexpectedly. Signora Luna and Flora came also, and now there was a zealous coffee-drinking and talk about the ball. The ball had been magnificent, and Flora one of its beaming stars; but—but it was with this magnificent ball as with so many others—it had been too hot, too much crowded. The grand quadrille in which Flora danced had had too little space in which to exhibit itself; the people who had to figure could not display themselves; people were almost overlooked, and had become mixed up with the crowd: in one word, they had not been amused.

"St. Orme among the gentlemen was the one who did most honour to his costume," said the Countess of G——, only added she, "he was somewhat too much of a Turk. Towards Flora in particular, he exercised a certain Sultan power. Perhaps," continued she, archly, "the Gentleman Envoyé would thus hold all poor attachés in order."

Flora was the first who acknowledged a desire to go to rest; and whilst I went to wake her sleeping maid, Anna, she ascended the steps which led to our chambers. Some time afterwards I also came up, and found her standing at the window of the corridor, looking thoughtfully out into the night illumined by feeble moonlight. As she did not appear to notice me, I touched her arm softly, and asked:

"Where are thy thoughts now, lovely mask?"

"Where?" answered the Circassian, with a strangely ringing voice. "Now! in the wilderness, where John nourished

himself with locusts, and clothed himself in camel's hair. Ah! to be there, far from the world, far from oneself!"

"Flora, you are"—strange, I would have added, but Flora interrupted me and said,

"Yes, what am I? I would really thank any one who would tell me what I am. What I was—I know."

"And what were you?"

"A being gifted with the richest and most beautiful powers, and who might have become—yet what is the use of speaking of that which I might have been? That which I shall become, begins to be tolerably clear to me."

"Certainly you may become whatever you really wish to be," said I.

Without seeming to regard these words, Flora continued bitterly, and full of thought—"Have you read in fairy-tales of people, who through an evil magic power have in one night been changed into Wer-wolves, and have taken upon themselves the evil nature of those who have bewitched them?"

"Yes," replied I; "but I have also read that the christian name of the bewitched spoken by a loving voice, has the power of dissolving the magic and saving the unhappy one."

"Who calls me thus? Who loves me thus? Nobody, nobody!" exclaimed Flora; "and I do not deserve it. I am not good! I am—but what matters it what I am. It will make nobody wise. Hate me as much as you can, Sophia. In so doing, you do the wisest thing. No! do not look so tragical. I laugh at myself, at you, and at the whole world."

Flora laughed, but not from her heart. Anna now came up.

"Will you not, for this once, let Anna go to rest, and accept me for your maid? I fancy I am not entirely without talent as——"

"No! my best Philosophia," exclaimed Flora, laughing; "that I really cannot, although I curtsy low, and thank you for this proposal, so full of honour. Yet I would rather see my pins in Anna's hands than in yours, although she now looks like one of the seven sleeping virgins. Anna! do not fall upon the candle! You are the veriest nightcap in all

Stockholm! Cannot you keep your eyes open for one quarter of an hour at night? Look at me! I have been awake the whole night, and I am still so lively."

"Yes, that I believe," replied Anna, grimly; "the young lady has amused herself, and danced, but——"

"If that is all that is wanted, you may dance on before me, in order to waken yourself."

Thus talking, the young lady and her maid disappeared in her chamber, and I went into mine. But it was long before I could sleep: Lennartson and his mother, the Viking and his wife, stood so livingly before my soul; and then Flora, with her strange, capricious confession. Still in sleep it occupied me, and the beautiful Circassian, and Wer-wolves, and locusts, made a strange confusion in my dreams.

The 21st.

A new revolution in Flora; a new light respecting Selma; and uncertain gleams respecting certain dark things. Signs of the times: conversation between my stepmother and me.

Felix Delphin's associates and friends; the gentlemen Rutschenfelt and Skutenhjelm, or the "Rutschenfelts," as they are called collectively, paid us, this morning, a rather unexpected visit, under the conduct of St. Orme and Felix. Their courteous errand was an invitation to a great sledging party, whose originators they were, and which was to be on Sunday. Felix wished to drive Selma, and St. Orme invited Flora to his sledge. This was to be covered with tiger-skins, and would be drawn by fiery piebalds, which Flora had seen, and greatly admired. This sledge was to lead the procession, which was to drive through the principal streets of the city to the park, where they were to dine, and after that were to dance, and so on.

Flora accepted the offer with evident delight, clapped her hands, and exclaimed, "Ah! I know nothing more divine than tiger-skins and fire-breathing horses! It will be a divinely-delightful drive!"

But Selma whispered suddenly to her, "Do not consent, I pray you! Think of Lennartson!"

"Well, why so?" replied Flora, impatiently.

"He would not like it. Defer at least a decided answer!"

"Ah! always difficulties and opposition when I wish any—"

thing," said Flora, with an impatient movement, and the crimson of vexation on her cheeks.

In the mean time Rutschenfelt had turned to my stepmother, and Skutenhjelm to me, with the offer of being our sledge-drivers. I looked at my stepmother, and my stepmother looked at me, and this time with unity of mind, since we both of us answered doubtfully, and asked for time to consider, before we could give a decided answer.

As we now all stood there undeterminedly and almost declining, the spirit of defiance entered Flora, and she said decidedly, "Others may do as they will, but I mean to go, and St. Orme has my promise."

"That is beautiful!" said he, "and I hope that the other ladies will follow so good an example. I will come this evening to receive the decided answer."

Scarcely was St. Orme gone, and the "Rutschenfelts," together with Felix, had rushed down stairs, when Lennartson entered. He soon was informed by my stepmother of that which had just occurred.

"What answer has Flora given?" asked he, curtly and hastily, as he turned himself to her.

"I have promised to go with St. Orme," replied Flora, although evidently not with a good conscience—"I know not why I should refuse such an innocent pleasure."

"It grieves me, Flora," said Lennartson mildly, but gravely; "I must beseech of you to give up this pleasure."

"It grieves me, Lennartson," said Flora, insolently, "that I cannot follow your wishes. I have already given my promise to St. Orme, and my guardian will certainly not compel me to break my promise."

"In this case, I must require that you recal an over-hasty promise. I have my reasons for it, which I do not now wish to give. In one word, Flora, you shall not go with St. Orme!"

"Shall not!" cried Flora with flashing eyes, "and who can forbid me?"

"I!" said Lennartson, calmly, but resolutely.

There was a time when I thought that I never could hear a man speak dictatorially to a woman without feeling my heart mutiny in my breast with hatred and bitterness. But now at this moment I heard such a mode of speaking, and I was calm! I felt the force of a noble power.

Flora felt it also. She said nothing. She went quietly aside to a window. Lennartson talked for a good while with my stepmother and me, as if nothing had happened.

When I next looked at Flora she sate and sewed. She was pale, grave, and as it were, changed. After a time, Lennartson seated himself directly opposite to her in the window. He took her half-reluctant hand, and his eyes sought hers. But she only looked down the more at her work. At once two bright tears rolled down upon it. Lennartson whispered "Flora!"

She raised her head, and looked at him with eyes that beamed with love.

Lennartson looked at her seriously, and at the same time evidently affected.

"Flora!" said he again, "how am I to understand you?"

"Can you not have confidence in me; not have faith in me; although you do not understand me?" replied she.

He said nothing, but kissed her hand repeatedly. Again several words passed between them, which I did not hear. When Lennartson arose, tears were in his eyes also. He bowed silently to us, and went out.

Flora sate silent for a long time, her face concealed in her pocket-handkerchief. I fancied she was deeply affected. But all at once she raised her head and exclaimed, "Ah, I am so vexed about the tiger-skins and the fiery horses. I should have driven as in a triumphal procession. I would have worn my red fur and my bonnet with the white feathers—that would have looked enchantingly beautiful!"

Selma looked at her with a half-wounded, half-troubled glance, as if she would say to her, "How can you now think about such a thing?"

Flora observed it and exclaimed, "See! Selma, do not copy Sophia, and look like a litany at any little vagaries of mine. I cannot help liking that which is splendid and beautiful. And some little pleasure will I have in this life if I am to live. Ah! a sunny, gay life is glorious. Take two cups, and pour into the one the bitter draught of renunciation, and into the other youth, strength, health, pleasure, joy—and I would defy even you, wise Philosophia, not to grasp after the latter. Oh! I would that I could drink out the latter, drink it to the very lees."

"And would," said I, "find there just the bitterest portion of the draught which you have represented to be the contents of the first cup. For my part, I will have a better joy—than pleasure; a better draught of refreshment than amusement."

"Give me," exclaimed Flora, "amusement, enjoyment! Let me have pleasure, pleasure, pleasure; and after that—let me die! So speaks a candid person."

"But not so a reasonable one," said I, smiling.

"And who told you that I am a reasonable person?" exclaimed Flora, with vehemence, as she waltzed around a few times. "Perhaps I am not at all a person. Perhaps I am one of those beings who float between heaven and earth, without the property of belonging to either of them, and which, therefore, dance upon the earth as bright will-o'-the-wisps. And—perhaps it is better so to dance, than like you and others, to grope over that about which nobody wants any certainty. Come, Selma, dear, let us waltz. Play us something from Strauss, Sophia; the wilder the better."

I played, and the two young girls danced; and that was just now as good as talking rationally with Flora. And sometimes people dance themselves into quiet, sooner than one can reason them into it. At the bottom of all Flora's outbreaks lay an inward disquiet. The whole day she was in an overstrained changeable humour, and seemed purposely to avoid becoming quiet and rational.

In the afternoon St. Orme came, and at sight of him Flora collected herself.

"How is it with our sledging party?" was his first question.

Flora with assumed calmness besought him to excuse her, reclaiming her promise for this party. "An earlier promise—another engagement, which she had forgotten this morning, prevented her——"

St. Orme heard her excuses with a dark look, and a crafty smile upon his thin lips. He then approached her, and said with a low voice:

"May one know what promise it is which prevents you from fulfilling the one which you made to me? But perhaps you have also now forgotten that?"

"That may be!" said Flora, with negligent pride.

"Such forgetfulness never occurs to me," said St. Orme,

with a mild but expressive voice. "I have a good memory ; and I can also prove it by that which I bear upon my breast." With these words he folded back his waistcoat a little, and I saw a bright something, which appeared to me in the haste to be a red ribbon. But paler was the red than that upon Flora's cheeks. She clenched her hand convulsively, and exclaimed in a bitter tone, as she turned herself suddenly from St. Orme to me : "How happy men are ! They can with arms in their hands demand right or revenge ! Ah, that I were a man !"

"Would you then fight with me, my lovely cousin ?" asked St. Orme, smiling. "Should we fight a duel ?"

"Yes," cried Flora ; "hotly, for life and death !"

"It is fortunate for me," continued St. Orme in a jesting tone, "that you are only a lady. And now I counsel you to use no other weapons against me than your beautiful eyes. To these I am ready to resign myself captive. Adieu, Flora ! Adieu, Sophia ! I wish you much pleasure this evening."

It was the day of the opera ; and Flora and Selma were to go, with Mrs. Rittersvård and her daughter, to my stepmother's box. My stepmother herself was a little wearied, and wished not to go ; and I promised Selma that I, at all events, would stay at home to keep her company, and to amuse her.

"And hear, thou sweet angel," whispered Selma, archly, before she went, "do not be too rigidly-christian in thy love of justice towards the Gyllenlöfs and the Silfverlings, in case the conversation turn upon them. Such 'spasmodic acquaintance' can bear a little bitterness and peppering."

I promised to be severe against them, and desired an explanation of the phrase "spasmodic acquaintance;" but she asked, "Is it possible not to understand it ? Oh golden innocence !" And she ran away, laughing at my ignorance.

Alone with my stepmother, I remarked that we, on both sides, were laden with strong material for a great conversation, and desired nothing better than that we should commence.

"It is extraordinary," began we, both of us, as we seated ourselves by the evening lamp.—(N.B. We begin our political discourses always with "It is extraordinary," or "It is wonderful," or "It is quite inconceivable;" or with a similar

expression of excitement, as an introduction to observations on some questions of the day. And as my stepmother and I, in consequence of our different political tendencies, take in opposition newspapers, so it is of consequence to us to have met with any appropriate reflection or phrase therein, in order that we may startle one another—nay, indeed, sometimes strike one another; but all in the very best friendliness, of course! This has been a horribly long parenthesis! Now, I had exactly to-day read in my newspaper various remarkable facts on the progress of industry, and had appropriated to myself a strong phrase respecting this giant work. It was as an introduction to it that I began with “It is remarkable.” And now at length is the parenthesis ended.)—When I heard my stepmother begin in the very same way as I had begun, I gave with due reverence the preference to her “extraordinary fact;” and it showed itself not to be the industrial spirit of the age, but it was “some people, and their want of understanding and good feeling,” of which my stepmother had had to-day an extraordinary proof. I saw Count Gyllenlöfs coming; and they came too, and with them Silfverlings. We accused the first of want of good breeding, of vanity and haughtiness; and we ridiculed the others on account of their foppery and their gentility. “The poor people!” they know no better. They are as pitiable as they are ridiculous, said we.

From them we went to other friends and acquaintance, and blew good and ill luck over the people. We added a little to the palsy of Mrs. Rittersvärd, and made it more apoplectic, and almost upset the triumphal chariot of “the Beauty,” that we might the better decide the choice of Sparrsköld, between beauty and virtue; that is to say, Flora’s sister, and Hellfrid Rittersvärd.

My stepmother wished greatly, for the sake of her good friend, Mrs. Rittersvärd, that the daughter might marry well, and Lieutenant Sparrsköld is a distinguished young man, and has good prospects; my stepmother, however, believes in the conquest of beauty; I hoped in the conquest of virtue, and we laid a wager upon it.

During all these arrangements for friends and relatives, I endeavoured, unobserved, to approach our own family, in order to hear the thoughts of my stepmother on the signs

and movements which now were going on within it. For this purpose, I confessed some observations which I had made on St. Orme, Flora, and Lennartson, and on the strange relationship between them.

My stepmother listened with excited attention, and put some sudden questions; but instead of opening to me her views, she withdrew herself at once into the intrenchments of the mystery, and with a demeanour which would have been worthy of Prince Metternich himself, said, "You must be convinced, my dear Sophia, that I see everything—see and hear perfectly everything which goes on around me, although I say nothing, nor will meddle in the affair, before I——"

Here began the diplomatic water-gruel. I swallowed it, and with it a little vexation. Unexpectedly my stepmother turned towards me with remarks on me and my position in life, together with certain bewildering questions as to whether I would not change it in case a suitable, good offer invited me—for example, if an elderly, sedate man, of good character, respectability, property, education, and handsome establishment, should offer, and so on.

Mortified a little by my stepmother's omniscience and reserve, I thought, "If my stepmother will enact Prince Metternich, then I can enact Prince Talleyrand;" and instead of replying to the inquiries of my stepmother, I began a warm panegyric on the freedom and emancipation of woman. My stepmother at this became very violent, and without understanding how and what I properly meant, opposed herself, with her utmost zeal, to all emancipation. I wished to explain, but she would—as I also, in fact—only hear herself, and so we over-clamoured one another for a long time.

The return of the opera-going ladies interrupted us. They came accompanied by Lennartson, the young Sparrsköld, and Felix. Signora Luna and her *caro sposo* increased our evening party, who, after accounts of the opera, were drawn into the strife which was on foot between my stepmother and me. They agreed that it should be fought out during supper. It was done with veritable zeal. All spoke on the subject with the exception of Selma. I had Åke Sparrsköld and Signora Luna on my side. The Rittersvärds and the Great Alexander ranged themselves on the side of my step-

mother. The latter was much troubled; her eyes twinkled much when I mentioned Thorild, and quoted certain passages which may be read in the fourth part of his collected works, and which certain gentlemen and certain ladies would do well a little to consider.

Lennartson for some time took merely a jesting part in the conversation, and amused himself with nullifying the arguments, right and left, by sallies of wit, mine in particular; at length, however, on my gravely demanding that he should understand me, he said some serious convincing words on the subject; some of those words, of great understanding, which are more charming to hear than the most delicious music. I delighted myself—by storing them up against a future day of judgment. These words closed the discussion. Baron Alexander was, however, much less satisfied with the decision. I concluded this from his reply to his lady, when she proposed that he should invite Lennartson to dine some day in the week when they would have company. He replied with a gruff negative; and as she beseechingly represented——

“But, my friend,” he interrupted her peremptorily—“but, my friend, I will not. It may be your place to propose things, but it is mine to decide. And now I have decided on this thing, and I will not hear another word.”

The Countess G. was silent; but a cloud passed over her countenance.

It is no wonder to me if she be a radical in the Emancipation question.

When we had separated for the night, Selma accompanied me (as she often does) with a light up to my chamber. There I reproached her jestingly for not having supported my motion this evening, and accused her of being altogether without any “*esprit de corps*.”

She denied laughingly the accusation, but said that for her part she had not felt yet the necessity of emancipation.

“I have,” said she, “looked up to the people who ruled over me. You know how kind my mother is towards me; how she wishes only my happiness, and does everything for it. And my father! Ah! how happy was I, that I could love him, obey him, direct myself in all things by him. And

after his death—" She stopped suddenly and blushed. I continued, "Well? and after his death."

"Yes, then I became acquainted with another man, and looked up to him."

"Aha!" thought I, and a light broke in upon me. "May I ask the name of the man?" said I, not without an arch look; "may I—name Lennartson?"

With great seriousness, but with a tremor of voice, Selma replied:

"I shall always be glad to have become acquainted, in him, with the noblest and best man on the earth. Might, oh might Flora but make him happy! For me, I wish merely to be his sister, his friend, and to have the right to be near him, to serve him, to contribute in any way to his happiness. May he be happy! may he be happy with Flora!"

"And then, my Selma, shall I not see thee happy with—"

"With no, no husband!" interrupted Selma warmly; "but I have a mother, I have thee, Sophia! I will live for you, and for the others who are dear to me. It is so sweet to love! But now, my mother indeed thinks that I am quite bewitched here. Good night, sweet, good, wise, dearest sister!"

She kissed me tenderly and joyfully, and I heard her singing Clara's song in Goethe's *Egmont* as she went down stairs:

Glücklich allein ist die Seele die liebt.

The 23rd.

Poor Felix! He loves Selma so warmly, and fears not being loved again. He is unhappy and dissatisfied with himself and with the whole world. He prays me to be to him friend and sister. How gladly will I! His warm heart and his confidence have softened me towards him; but—but——!

The 24th.

I feel now more clearly, that I am here on a volcanic soil; a soil, which gnawing passions make at the same time interesting and dangerous. For who can tell what the explosion may turn out,—whether it may merely produce a beautiful atmospheric appearance, or desolate whole countries. Were not my own heart already too much interested on

my young sister's account, I should view these scenes of human life, and the enfolding of this, in some respects, puzzling connexion, with calmness, and also with pleasure.

Ah! it is good, however, when the youthful time is over, and quieter years come. It is good when the wild combat of the feelings allays itself; good also that it has been, for it has—produced a world! And over it floats a new spirit with new life; the quiet spirit of thought, which lays coolingly its hand upon our hot brows, separates darkness from light, and says to the eye, “Be clear,” and to life, “Be calm.”

In the Evening.

What is this? Will the frenzy of love and romance which is in this family infect indeed the whole world? Or is it with certain mental dispositions, as with the nocturnal dance of the Scottish witches, who draw into their circle whatever comes near to them, and compel it—to dance with them? But no! In the name of free-will, it shall not become so! and for that reason I will—immediately make confession to myself.

Full of the composing and gladdening thoughts which I had written down this morning, I went out to take a walk. I find great pleasure in rambling through Stockholm, and in looking about me on these occasions. How many various shapes of life move themselves in a large city! how many human propensities and gifts here have taken bodily shape and glance forth with peculiar, marked physiognomies! I find pleasure in observing these little worlds, and in thinking how they all strive forth towards the same sun, and may be brightened by it; I find pleasure in conversing with them, and in letting them answer me.

The Finnish national poem Kalevala, calls the radical words, the words with which the spirits and the being of nature rule each other, PRIMEVAL WORDS, and these words seem to be the PRIMEVAL-BEING of things themselves, the mystery of their inward life. Whenever they may be addressed or conjured in such words, they must answer, they must obey.

This has a deep, gladdening truth.

But one finds not when one will PRIMEVAL WORDS (neither

in the poem Kalevala, nor in actuality). One must be in a particular frame of mind. . . .

This day was favourable in an especial manner for life and observation, for its changing play of shadow and light caused the various regions of the city to appear in a changeful and living manner.

More than ever was I captivated by the peculiar beauty of Stockholm; historical memories rose up like crowned spirits from the seven islands. . . . I seemed to hear the Saga-songs in the winds, in the rushing of the waves on these shores, which good and evil deeds, which great actions and great sufferings, have stamped with their poetic seal.

I once saw a capital without any towers, without any one building exceeding in beauty and size the rest; all were equal, and people said, "See here the image of a true social community."

But no! it is not so. When a people come to the consciousness of its full life, its cities and its buildings will testify of it: there must the flaming spires of temples ascend to the sky; there must columns of honour stand in memorial of great men; there must magnificent palaces (not private ones!) express the sense of greatness in a noble public spirit; there the *beautiful* must express in manifold forms the *good* in the life of the state.

But whither does my wandering pen conduct me? My feet led me this time south, high up the mountain and then down to the strand, and into a boat, that I might again go north. I had just seen a man leave a small house on the shore, where a pale elderly woman followed him with blessings to the door, and saw him now go with hasty steps down the stairs to the strand, where the boat lay. As I came down, he turned round, and with a joyful "Åh!" and outstretched arms, helped me lightly into the boat, where he took his place at the helm. It was the Viking!

It pleased me to meet with him, especially as I remarked that his large brown eyes rested upon me with the same expression as they had done on the first evening of our acquaintance. I was warm from walking, the wind had played somewhat wildly with my hair, I knew that I was looking well, and saw that the Viking thought so also. A certain satisfaction in soul and body; the low dashing of the waves

around me, the mild air, the rich spectacle round about, Brenner's presence—all gave me a feeling of exalted life, and this caused me involuntarily to give expression to the thoughts and impressions which had animated and still animated me.

Brenner listened with evident sympathy and pleasure; but when I expressed my wish "that people still more and more would come to understand life by the light of reason and to live in bright thoughts," he shook his head, and said:

"Science and philosophy cannot make people better, can contribute but little to their true happiness. The inclinations of the heart alone give to life fulness and worth. The pure atmosphere of thought appears to me like the air of Mont Blanc; one can see in it all the great stars and the clouds under one's feet, but one can scarcely breathe, and all life is soon extinguished from want of the breath of life."

I replied: "The life of thought excludes not the life of feeling, but rules it, and prevents its preponderance. Reason saves man from much suffering."

"Reason!" exclaimed the Viking; "I will know nothing of such reason as kills the best life of the soul, which prevents man from suffering. Without suffering life is not worth much."

I felt myself struck by this thought, and especially by the looks and the tone in which it was spoken, yet notwithstanding, I said:

"There is so much irrational, aimless suffering; so much tormenting feeling, without rhyme or reason."

"Ah!" said Brenner, "much that appears irrational, is still at bottom good! if it be for nothing else than to slay the egotism which makes us so careful about ourselves, so calculating, so coldly-and-stiffly reasonable that it is—horrible. Feelings without rhyme or reason! They are precisely such as these which please me. Who, for example, speaks of a rational love? And yet love is the noblest feeling of life, its sublimest flower. I, for my part, never am rational—never was so—and never, I hope, shall be."

Smiling and well-pleased I combated his arguments, and would know nothing of any other than of a rational love; whereupon the Viking grew hot, but in a cheerful and good-humoured way.

When we lay to at Logården, and Brenner offered his hand to assist me out, he said, "Do not be angry with me on account of my want of reason, Miss Adelan! I will see whether I cannot improve."

"Perhaps we shall understand each other better for the future," said I, cheerfully, and with a friendly feeling.

"Thanks for the words! Yes, may we do so!" said the Viking, and pressed my hand.

What does all this denote? and why does it give me pleasure to please this man, whom I have known so short a time? No, Cousin Flora, it is not a passion for conquest, at least not a blameable one, and—if it had been so for a moment, I would take care that it was not so again. For to wish to be agreeable to persons whom one finds agreeable, that is no sin, and no weakness; but a pleasing and becoming nature. It is the foundation of all that which makes social life charming and happy. But human love must not degenerate into——

The 25th.

Worse and worse! Yesterday as we landed I expressed my delight at some hyacinths and jonquils which were carried past us. To-day these flowers diffuse their odour in my room. They were accompanied by a note from the Viking!

Good now! Flowers are the symbol of good-will and friendship. I will regard these as such.

The 29th.

The Baroness Bella B., the Beauty, and Hellfrid Rittersvård, paid us a visit. Afterwards, Åke Sparrsköld, Felix, and others. "The Beauty" expatiated (quite *mal-à-propos*, methinks) on the unhappiness and disagreeableness of ugliness. She pities "from her heart plain people;" but they must at least know that they are plain, and must stop at home, and not exhibit themselves out in the world, and in society, where they can awaken only disagreeable feelings.

I was provoked at this speech, which evidently was made with reference to Hellfrid Rittersvård, whose calm, classical demeanour I admired at this moment. She only cast a quiet, patient look upon the cruel "Beauty," and said mildly, "As it is not plain people's fault that they are plain, it is excusable if they go among their fellow-beings with the confidence

that they will show indulgence and kindness towards them ; nay, precisely on account of their misfortune, if one must take the affair so seriously."

This was said with an indescribably noble expression, and I should have replied with warmth, had not young Sparrsköld anticipated me as he exclaimed :

"I cannot understand the importance which certain people set upon outward beauty or plainness. I am of opinion that all true education, such at least as has a religious foundation, must infuse a noble calm, a wholesome coolness, an indifference, or whatever people may call it, towards such-like outward gifts, or the want of them. And who has not experienced of how little consequence they are in fact for the weal or woe of life ? Who has not experienced how, on nearer acquaintance, plainness becomes beautified, and beauty loses its charm, exactly according to the quality of the heart and mind ? And from this cause am I also of opinion, that the want of outward beauty never disquiets a noble nature, nor will be regarded as a misfortune. It never can prevent people from being amiable and beloved in the highest degree. And we have daily proofs of this."

I could have embraced the young man for these words, which calling forth a look of vexation in the countenance of the Beauty, made her plain, whilst a joyful emotion diffused over Hellfrid's countenance the splendour of beauty. Åke Sparrsköld had never appeared handsomer to me than at this moment. Later in the evening he sang. He had an extremely agreeable voice. I said so to Miss Rittersvärd ; she agreed, but so shortly, that I might have fancied her to be cold, had I not observed by her look that her feelings were only too warm.

The 1st of December.

Visits and entertainment. Rutschenfelts and Co. ; together with a conversation which turned upon Gyllenlöf's soirées, magnificent rooms and furniture, and such like ; as well as on the delicate dinners of the new-married couple, the O——skölds. What wine ! what delicacies ! St. Orme took the lead, and Felix and his friends joined in. Among these, a young Captain Rummel (Åke Sparrsköld's captain) distinguished himself, whom the other young gentlemen

looked up to with a certain admiration and a certain envy. His domestic establishment was described as a pattern of comfort and elegance, was celebrated as a pattern of a bachelor's housekeeping. People spoke in particular of his sleeping-room, of his expensive toilet, and of his own portrait, which was hung up there over his own bed. (This seemed to me like a little idol-temple of self, and I felt at that moment contempt mount up within me.) Beyond this, his connoisseurship in the delicacies of the table was extolled.

He, however, politely yielded the palm in this to the Chamberlain, who accepted it modestly; as he confessed, that although in Sweden people were rather "gourmand" than "gourmet," yet that he belonged to the latter class of people.

Felix agreed with him, that in roast veal there are only three pieces which are "really eatable." By degrees, they began to draw a picture of all that was required in these days to make life comfortable. (Nevertheless I suspect, from what I know of certain connexions of Captain Rummel, that certain necessities of this felicitous life were now omitted out of regard to the ladies present.) Felix sighed deeply on account of the large sum of money which the satisfying of all these wants demanded.

In the mean time, Lennartson was occupied in a distant part of the room in reading various newspapers; still I am convinced that he heard all that was spoken in the room. At length, rising and approaching the company, he smiled and exclaimed:

"Here is also a picture of human wants which is original. Will the gentlemen hear it?" And he read from a newspaper which he held in his hand the following article from *Hernösand* :*

"The learned mathematical lecturer Aurén died here during the past month,† at the age of eighty-one. He was the author of several learned works, and among these some on Biblical Chronology, which he published at his own expense. Notwithstanding, he amassed out of his small salary, on which he lived and in his latter years divided with a curate, the sum of eight thousand rix dollars. This could not have been done without the most perfect self-denial of

* The capital city of Norland.

† February, 1842.

all worldly pleasures and comforts. To what extent he carried these sacrifices may be shown by this, that his needy dwelling, even in the severest weather, was never warmed, nor was a candle ever lighted within it. When darkness came down, he lay on his bed, whilst his favourites the stars, which were to him sufficient company, furnished a subject for his thoughts, or, if the heavens were clear, for his observation. That he was not impelled hereto by a sordid selfishness, is proved as much by the support which during his life he privately extended to cases of necessity, as by the noble manner in which he has disposed of his property.

"Four thousand eight-hundred rix-dollars he has appropriated to two stipends. He has given a house in the city to an old man, whose wife tenderly and carefully waited upon him during the latter years of his life. The remainder of his property descends to his needy connexions."

After Lennartson had ended, a short silence ensued in the room. Selma's beaming eyes were directed to the reader, whilst the eyes of Felix rested upon her.

Now arose a light murmur: "Well, yes! an anchorite, a hermit,—but one cannot live in this way if one lives in the world, if one will live with people."

"That I confess," answered Lennartson; "but it is a question whether the system of lecturer Aurén will not contribute more than the system which prevails here, towards the obtaining peace and happiness during a long life on earth."

"I would as soon die to-morrow morning," exclaimed Felix, "as live a long life without human happiness!"

"And I," cried Skutenhjelm, "would rather shoot myself through the head the day after to-morrow, than sentence myself to lie a tithe of the year in darkness and cold. If one is to be buried, it is better to be dead first."

"You forget," said Lennartson smiling, "that Aurén saw the stars beaming over him, and certainly found more pleasure from them than we from the wax-lights in our drawing-rooms. And as concerns human happiness," continued he, as he looked at Felix, "I am sorry that a young man should not understand the pleasure which he has enjoyed—the pleasure of useful activity—the pleasure of—doing good."

There was in Lennartson's look and voice something so serious as he spoke these last words, that Felix evidently

was struck by them. The tears came to his eyes, he went away, took a book, and sate down at a table. Selma's eyes followed him evidently with deep sympathy. Lennartson observed her attentively.

Some time afterwards, as St. Orme was continuing the interrupted conversation with some gentlemen, and was relating to them various particulars of Paris life and its charms, Lennartson went to Selma, seated himself by her, and said gently, "Was I too severe, Miss Selma?"

"Oh, no!" replied she with animation, "there was so much justice in what you said, but——"

"But what? What but?"

"I think that your words really grieved his heart, and—— he thinks so much of you."

Lennartson said nothing; but after a while I saw him approach Felix, and lay his hand upon his shoulder.

Felix reddened deeply as he looked up, and with an expression of sincere love met the glance of kindness which Lennartson directed to him.

"I have not seen you for a long time in my house, Felix," said Lennartson with friendliness. "Will not you dine with me to-morrow? I promise you," continued he, pleasantly joking, "no O—sköldish dinner; but I promise also that neither shall you be treated with Aurénish household-fare. I confess that I myself should be but little satisfied with such."

Felix accepted the invitation half-embarrassed and half-pleased.

After the guests were gone, we, particularly my stepmother and I, made our "*reflexions chrétiennes et morales*," on the Aurénish and St. Ormish ideas of life. I grew warm for the first. My stepmother poured cold water over my fire, and talked of "exalting, overstraining, and excess;" and said that one might be "yet very good if one lived like other people, took part in the pleasures of the world, and enjoyed its good things." My stepmother was for the motto of Queen Christina—"moderation" (which she herself, however, generally managed to forget). Flora was thoughtful, and said, "When I was a child, and in my early youth, I had sometimes such Aurénish and Pythagorian fancies; I dreamed of—but they soon taught me to laugh at such dreams, and to seek after other aims. Yet, perhaps, these were more of

dreams, more of deceptions, than the first. Ah!" continued Flora, with a sudden burst of melancholy, "who can be born anew; who can again be a little child?"

She burst into tears. Selma threw her arms round her, and began to weep with her. My stepmother looked quite in consternation, and I reproached her jestingly with this "*lamentabile*." Selma took up my strain, and we ended the day, "*scherzando*."

The 14th December.

We have passed some weeks in visiting the collections of works of art, academies, and various other public institutions of the capital. To many of these I shall often again return, for many of them have had great interest for me. And wherein indeed lies the worth of a solid education, if it does not enable us to understand and value every species of useful human activity, and open our eyes to life in all its affluence. It offers us also an extended life. I remarked too with pleasure, how willingly scientific men turn themselves to those in whom they perceive a real interest, and where they feel that they are understood.

Lennartson, who was our conductor in these visits, by his own great knowledge and by the art of inducing others to unfold theirs, increased our pleasure in the highest degree. And how highly esteemed and valued is he by all. Flora listened attentively to him, but seldom to any one else, and betrayed quite too great a desire to shine herself. Selma belongs to those who say little themselves, but who understand much, and conceal much in their hearts. Lennartson and I listen attentively to all her remarks. They always contain something exciting, and often something suggestive. She has a beautiful and pure judgment. A good head, together with a good heart, is a glorious thing in a human being.

Now it is necessary to sit still; to be industrious, and to finish Christmas knick-knacks in ten days. It is not my affair.

The 25th.

Christmas-eve is over, with its Christmas knick-knacks, lights, and tarts. My stepmother, who thinks much of children, had invited here those of several of her acquaint-

ance, and among them the children of the Viking. Selma had prepared many trifles for the little ones, which occasioned great delight; and we amused ourselves by contriving plays for them, in which Selma was just as much a child as any of the rest. Felix helped us with ready good-will, but Flora was out of humour, and would neither amuse herself nor others. Brenner's children are lively, sweet creatures, and it did one good to see their behaviour to the father. Rosine, the eldest, eight years old, and the youngest boy, the little Adolf, pleased me much. The poor little fellow is somewhat lame in the hip. Was it now, "mother's love," which, as a Professor, one of my friends, asserts, exists in all women, or a particular liking which drew me towards the little boy: but this is certain, that when I had set him on my knee, and he had looked up to me with a clear and joyous child's glance, I was involuntarily compelled in an actual feeling of love and longing, to embrace him protectingly, and to clasp him to my breast. But as I saw that his father looked at us, as if he would have liked to have embraced us both, I became cooler in my tenderness. And how the father must love the children! Did I not hear him say this evening, that one must, in choosing a wife, take into consideration the future children, and what father and mother one would give them. I could not do otherwise than for the most part concede the right to him in this respect.

The crown of the evening to me was my countryman Runeberg's beautiful little poem, "The Christmas Eve," which the Viking had brought with him, and read aloud with a pure and noble expression. He placed me again in my native land, in its wild natural scenery, amid its powerful, contented, and patient people.

My heart swelled. And now—it is church-time, and I shall go to church.

In the Evening.

The sun shone through a great eye into the chancel as I entered the church, and light smoke-clouds from the lights, which had been extinguished after the early sermon, floated through the rays of light upwards into the vaulted roof. It was beautiful. The church, although I came early, was so full of people that it was not possible for me to find a seat,

especially as many strove for the same thing. After some vain attempts, I resolved to stand during service, and found a safe place against a wall, near to women who were sitting, and girls who were standing, to whom I offered eau-de-Cologne. I was happy in my soul, and had never felt more devotional. As the organ broke forth with its mighty tones, the blood rushed through my veins, and a gentle shudder passed through me as a single voice elevated itself, and strongly and softly sang of the highest wonder of the world—of the wonder of which the people even now, and now perhaps more than ever, speak with admiration—

A Virgin has conceived, and borne a son.

Now joined in the congregation, and I with them, with a full, overflowing heart. Scarcely had the singing ended when I heard near my corner a tolerably harsh voice, which asked :

“Has Miss Adelan no seat?”

It was the Viking. He was so kind as to compel me to take his seat at a little distance. I did this for the sake of quiet in the church. Brenner remained standing near me, and accompanied me home after the service.

At home, I found Flora in a stormy temper. She had a headache from the screams of the children on the former evening; she knew no days so bad as Sundays, when one must be sad and religious. This whole day we should be alone, according to the regulation of my stepmother; on this day her domestics go to church, and are allowed to rest. Neither were we either invited out. What was one to do with the whole long day? One might gape oneself to death. And to-morrow! Then it would be still worse with us. One should die of over-exertion. Then would a great fishing-net bring to us the whole populous relationship. A dozen and a half of uncles and aunts, every one of them turtles; and more than a score of cousins, all of the generation of had-docks. And one should be compelled to see these from noonday till midnight; from noonday till midnight one must be polite to them; and from noonday till midnight one must amuse them. Ah! one should go distracted!

Selma and I, and at last also Flora herself, were obliged

to laugh at these desperate circumstances, and we made various propositions for boldly meeting them.

I proposed that we should all agree to be merry, and to fall into whatever Christmas joke we might be inspired with. But Selma met that with a slight shaking of the head, and with "That will not do." Several of our gracious aunts are a little prim, and the Lord has given to me such a fund of joy, that certainly—were I to let this out before them—they would really think me crazy. Upon this my stepmother came and besought us to be "tranquil;" all would go on well and easily; she was accustomed to such things. We should only not torment ourselves, but keep ourselves cheerful, and so on. Selma sighed, and began to sing a song. In the evening she entertained her mother and me with reading to us. Flora went early to bed, and this was a relief to us all.

The third Christmas-day.

The great netting is over, and we repose, well pleased, upon our laurels.

The dinner—well! during dinner one can always live, even with forty persons. Good eating is good company, and puts people in good humour. A great loss was it that the Chamberlain did not come. We had reckoned upon his "good stories," as upon the pepper and salt of the dinner. But he has taste only for small select dinner-parties, and has no inclination to sacrifice himself.

Immediately after dinner they had coffee, which also is enlivening; but after this comes a heavy interval, namely, from coffee to tea-time. One is heavy from eating; heavy from the heat; heavy from the company of thirty heavy people; heavy from the duty of entertaining these. All this is not light. I know very well, however, that the person who looks most petrified has in himself a living, enlightening spark, and that it only requires a fire-steel wherewith to strike this, in order to call it out; I have often experienced that with pleasure, and I began therefore now to go about in the company as a fire-steel; but it either was my fault, or the fault of the others, nowhere would it give fire—nay, not even smoke or crackle the least. True is it—and I said this for my comfort—that I was too little acquainted with

most of the present guests rightly to understand how to strike upon them. Flora gave herself not the least trouble about the company, but sate there with the most annoyed countenance in the world, and turned over a memorandum-book.

Selma moved with the most heartfelt politeness and kindness here and there in the company, and began now with one and now with another a conversation, and tried to make the people chat together, and wherever she turned herself, there her sweetness failed not to call forth a little life; but it soon died out again when she was gone. With one word, it would not succeed, but was ever stiller and stiller, hotter and heavier; and I remembered a witty Countess's description of a *soirée* in our highest "*haute volée*"—"We were like fish in a fish-tank, which, on account of the heat, swim slowly about and wind about another, and only now and then move their gills a little."

Three or four card-tables had taken away a part of the gentlemen; but we had several, who neither played nor yet talked, and the whole mass of sitting ladies, and—these were to be entertained till twelve o'clock at night!

It was now somewhat after six. My stepmother sate on the sofa, and swallowed her yawns under the most polite gestures; but her look was more and more troubled, and her eye sought Selma, and asked intelligibly "What are we to do?"

Selma came to me and whispered "This is horrible! In my despair I have just now told a little bit of scandal to my aunt Pendelfelt, but she looked with such a 'God defend us' air, that I took to flight. But now we must set on foot a revolution, in order to enliven us. Poor mamma looks as if she were ready to fly the field! Have you no little suggestion—no bright idea?"

"Yes, a splendid idea! We will introduce a Finland Christmas game, with song and dance, which I remember. I will propose it."

"Ah! that will never do."

"It must do." And I lifted my voice, and proposed to the company to take part in a Christmas game.

I could see by the horrible and perfect stillness which followed my proposal, how bold it was, and my stepmother looked somewhat embarrassed on my account.

But I have a certain Finnish vein in me, which makes me with lively perseverance go through with whatever is begun with boldness. I renewed therefore my proposition, and turned myself particularly to some gentlemen and ladies in company, and explained to them the plan of the game, and besought them to take part. I found several, especially among the ladies, ready to fall into my scheme, but—it was so difficult!——“The game was to be accompanied with song, and they could not sing,” and so on, with a thousand difficulties; and the royal secretary, Krusenberg, whom I besought to open the dance with me, started back horrified, and exclaimed, “No, heaven forbid, my gracious lady! Impossible that I can!”

It began to get darker before my eyes, as to how the affair was to be managed, when my fortunate star opened the drawing-room door, and Signora Luna, the Baron, and Lieutenant Sparrsköld, entered.

“We are saved,” whispered I to Selma, “if we can only interest them in our proposal.”

“That will easily be done, I fancy,” replied she. “I see Lennartson coming; we will speak with him.”

And when Lennartson came to us we told him our trouble, and I prayed him with my whole heart to help me in my daring undertaking. As long as I live shall I be thankful for the readiness and kindness with which he entered into the scheme. There are actions in social life which show as much goodness of soul and human love as the visiting of captives.

I went with the Baron to Signora Luna to beg for her help; and now our horizon became perfectly bright, for she replied frankly and joyously that she would be “more than willing” to lead this game, which she knew, and which she had often played in her childhood. And as the kindly-beaming Mrs. Luna opened the dance with the Baron, and I followed on Sparrsköld’s hand, up sprung the royal secretary Krusenberg to Selma, and prayed to dance with her; thus a great movement took place, a stirring and rising in the whole company, and the procession, as it turned out into the large drawing-room, became greater and ever greater. My stepmother engaged the little Miss M., who had no partner; other ladies followed her example; grey-headed men and matrons joined; everybody was soon upon their legs, and the

merry game in full progress, and jokes and laughter flourished. My stepmother began to look quite happy.

It was a surprise to me when I saw among the dancers St. Orme, whose entrance I had not noticed, and discovered Flora, no longer the contradictory, ill-humoured Flora, but, in the light of the newly-arrived gentleman's glances, a more and more joyous and charmingly beaming Flora.

The game was not properly a game of forfeits, but the Baron made it such, at the instigation of Signora Luna, who thought that the redeeming of forfeits would be amusing. And as the dancing had continued some time, and it looked as if people begun to be a little tired, and a great number of forfeits were collected, "Our lady" with the bright eyes seated herself magnificently and solemnly in the middle of the circle, and said—

"I burn, I burn, I glow, I glow,
Who owns this forfeit I would know?"

One of the first who had to redeem a forfeit was the royal secretary Krusenberg. His penalty was to declaim something before the company, and as his talent in this art was well known, a general expectation was excited, which was all the more increased by the merry countenance with which the young declamator proceeded to his work. He had often shown during this game that he wished to produce an "effect," and now set about most properly to "startle us." He did this truly, but not in a pleasant way; for he began with great pathos to declaim—the Lord's Prayer.

With a flash of noble indignation in her eyes, Selma rose up, went to him and said, "Mr. Secretary Krusenberg, it were better that you never said the holy words, than that you spoke them here in that way."

The declamator looked somewhat confounded.

"Defend us! Miss Selma is severe to-day!" said he, reddening, and added, while he endeavoured to look quite at his ease, "Well, then, I must then think of something else;" and he began to read some French verses, but not in any extraordinary manner: he was evidently out of humour from the little scene, and from the impression which it seemed to have made upon the company. I immediately looked at Lennartson, who stood a little out of the circle, and read in

his eyes, which followed Selma, an expression of decided approbation and pleasure.

With highly-crimsoned cheeks, Selma seated herself by me, and after she had been for some time silent, she turned her lovely and once more gentle eyes to me, and asked :

"Did I do wrong, Sophia?"

"You did very right," said I, as I pressed her hand.

"But I was certainly too violent, too severe?"

"No; but if you think so, say in a while a word of explanation to the young man."

"Yes, I have been thinking so myself," replied Selma.

An old gentleman, who during the game had distinguished himself by his cheerful participation and liveliness, came diffidently and seated himself near us, and said gaily :

"It is quite pleasant to be made so cheerful here. When one becomes old and heavy, and all is still around one, then one feels oneself often so stupified, so deadened, that one is ready to think 'it is all over with thee, thou poor simpleton, over, quite over.' But if one happens to be shaken up or animated, then one can see that it is not quite over with one. Nay, there is so much to be awakened anew and revived in us, that one must be as much pleased as one is amazed to think 'Oh that thou shouldst still be so young and so full of life.'"

Upon this I made the wise remark, that this proves that in truth the soul preserves her fresh life, although during the evening twilight, as we call "age," it slumbers a while.

The old man smiled, and replied, "How lovely she is. It really does an old heart good to look at her, and to talk with her."

As I thought that these words were a little incongruous as an answer to my observation, I looked at the old gentleman with astonishment, and remarked that he had riveted his eyes with a bright expression upon Selma, who, to redeem a forfeit, was sentenced "to stand a statue," and who did it in the most charming manner. Whilst I now, together with my neighbour, silently observed her, I perceived St. Orme's voice. He had in his customary soft, almost stealthy manner, seated himself near me, whilst he, with an expression of melancholy very uncommon to him, said :

"Do you remember my late wife——Virginia?"

"Yes," I replied; "she was one of the loveliest women that I have ever seen."

"Don't you think that Selma has a resemblance to her—less in the features than in expression, and in the whole being; for example, in the proud and yet charming; in the union of the princess and sylph; in that which is in the highest sense MAIDENLY? And her voice! she often recalls the voice—which is silent for ever."

Such words from St. Orme! I looked at him surprised, but he seemed to have forgotten me and everything around him, sunk silently in sorrowful remembrance.

Why have I felt myself from the beginning so much excited against St. Orme? Why have I not thought of finding out the good in him? At this moment his whole being seemed to me ennobled.

Were but human beings always that which they are in their best moments, then should we know here already on earth a kingdom of heaven, of beauty, and goodness. But——!

The redeeming of the forfeits, in which song and dance were brought forward, lasted till supper.

After supper, I saw Selma slowly make her way to the window where Krusenberg stood. A little while afterwards, she came to me, and whispered joyfully:

"Now I have concluded peace with Krusenberg."

"And what did you say to him?"

"I prayed him to pardon my warmth, but said to him at the same time what a painful feeling he had occasioned me, and—in a word, I was friendly and candid towards him."

"Well, and what did he say?"

"He—what do you think? He thanked me and confessed his error, his thoughtlessness; nay, he charged himself with so many faults, that I was a little afraid of listening to him. But, Sophia, how much good there is in people."

"Yes, now! is not that my everlasting sermon? But one must also be careful to call it forth. As one shouts into the wood, so is it answered back again."

And these were our "*faits et gestes*" on this day, whose memorandum I may not however close, without adding to it the "honourable mention" which, at the end of the day, my stepmother made of my good deportment, of my looks, and my toilet. The latter part lost itself in the following

agreeable "*clair-obscuré*," "and in that dress—with thy beautiful white arms, and pearls in thy brown hair, and with all this, there—thou didst not look as if thou wert above twenty—and so '*distingué*!' and I assure thee, that more than one—um, um, um!"

I (modest and half curious to hear more).—"Oh, my sweet mother!"

My Stepmother.—"Um! um! um! I say nothing, as long—um! um! um!" . . .

The 28th of December.

FRAGMENTS OF A CONVERSATION.

"But tell me, Selma, how shall I explain to myself Flora's position between Lennartson and St. Orme? She really loves the first, and is betrothed to him, and yet the latter has a wonderful power over her. And she—how unequal and strange she is towards him. Sometimes she appears coquettish, sometimes afraid of him; at times almost hostile, then again submissive, nay humble; then again proud—what indeed can be the ground of all this?"

Selma (with a sort of anxiety).—"Ah, do not ask me! I know not, I understand not how that is; but this I know, that Flora, since St. Orme's arrival has been quite changed. Her temper has never been equal, and her lively imagination has always led her to fly from one object to another; but still she was in all so charming, so pleasant, so amiable."

I.—"How long has Lennartson been betrothed to Flora?"

Selma.—"Rather more than a year. It occurred at the death-bed of her mother. But I know not why her betrothal was not made known. Old General Lennartson about that time had a paralytic stroke, and his son went abroad with him in hopes of re-establishing his father's health. When Lennartson, a few months ago, returned alone, St. Orme was already here, and Flora changed. But she herself will neither speak of this, nor hear it spoken of. And truly things cannot long go on in this way. It seems to me so unnatural. I hope much from the New-Year and its power. Do you see how Mathilde, between King Hiskia and Lord Wellington reddens already! And here King Ahasuerus begins to open his bright-blue eyes. How pleasant it will be to see all these in full bloom!"

Thus my young sister sought to escape from a subject which grieved her, and to forget amid bright pictures the dark ones. But the dark ones cannot be so overlooked; they must be penetrated—made transparent if possible. I mean after this to keep my eyes well open.

The 1st of January, 18—.

A bouquet of fresh flowers, and a cordial hand-pressure from the Viking—is the glad impression which I have derived from the forenoon visits.

In the Evening.

Ready-dressed for the Exchange Ball, in black, with lace; pearls in my hair, on my neck and arms.

Be quiet, Selma, dear!—Thou shouldst not make me vain! Thou shouldst not mislead thy elder sister.

Flora goes with “the Beauty” to the Exchange, and makes her toilet with her. I am not in good spirits, and I fancy that I shall have no pleasure. But still, however, a quiet observer need not experience any annoyance, when she herself will not play any part. It is now more than ten years since I saw the world in a New-Year’s Assembly in Stockholm. How will it now appear to me? “*Allons et voyons!*”

The 2nd.

Let us now relate something of the Exchange Ball. When we entered the large, magnificently-lighted saloon (we came rather late), the upper, that is to say, the aristocratic part was filled. My stepmother nevertheless steered our way there, and said cheerfully to us, “Oh, we certainly shall find seats!” But the “honourables” sate like stone-houses on their seats; and at Selma’s earnest and whispered prayers her mother desisted from all attempts to unsettle these ladies. Thus we described, with all dignity, a half circle; and amid the most courteous greetings, we made our retreat towards the lower regions of the saloon, where we obtained places near the door. Now entered Count Gyllenlöf’s brilliant group, accompanied by the Silfverling family. As they paused for a moment at the entrance, to obtain a view of the saloon, my stepmother rose to speak to the Countess, but she turned herself away with a short and cold salutation, and then floated past us with her splendid train, which seemed

not to observe us the very least in the world. My step-mother seated herself, evidently mortified and wounded. Selma was so too, for her mother's sake, and said in a tone of vexation, "How stupid they are!"

A comet-like appearance now suddenly moved through the room. It was Flora and her sister, accompanied by gentlemen. They were both of them dazzlingly beautiful, and dressed with the utmost elegance. Flora nodded gaily to us, and followed her sister up the room, where they found places near the Gyllenlöfs, who had taken seats near the platform, which was arranged for the royal family. Selma looked after Flora, and tears came involuntarily into her eyes. We sate tolerably forlorn, among quite unknown people. My step-mother looked quite troubled, and I felt myself really depressed for her sake. Then my young sister took heart, and began to introduce to me, in her lively manner, those who were arriving and those who had already arrived. My step-mother on this cheered up, and was challenged by me to show now also her great knowledge of the world and of mankind.

In the mean time we fell into discourse with a charming young girl, who appeared very zealous to learn something of the great world about her, which she now saw for the first time. This charming young person amused us with her liveliness, and the naïve candour with which she communicated to us her great fear that this evening she should not dance a single dance, as she had scarcely any acquaintance here, and besides this, was so strange and so bashful in the world, and so on. She would, however, console herself for sitting the whole evening, if she could only see the royal family; but somebody had just now told her that perhaps they might not be at the ball. And she had promised her little sisters to wake them when she came home, and tell them about the princess and the young princes. Her fear was soon changed into the most lively delight, as the royal chamberlains showed themselves, and everybody in the saloon rose to salute the Queen, who, with the Crown-prince, the Crown-princess, and the two eldest princes, Carl and Gustav, accompanied by a brilliant train, entered the saloon, and amid kindly greetings went across the room, to take their seats on the platform. And now we rejoiced our-

selves, Selma and I, to have been near the door, where we could observe the royal family so well.

Selma's new little friend was quite charmed, and gave her heart immediately to Prince Gustav; whilst Selma said, jestingly, that she had chosen Prince Carl for the favourite of her heart.

Scarcely had the royal family seated themselves, when the Gyllenlöf's party fell into conversation with the royal attendants. Young Silfverling paid attentions to the young ladies of the court.

The quadrille began now slowly to form at the upper end of the saloon. The royal chamberlains had gone round, and given out gracious invitations in the name of the illustrious guests. Now the Crown-princess, majestic and glittering with jewels, was seen to open the quadrille with Baker N., a little, stout old man, whose good-tempered, polite behaviour shows how easily true moral education effaces every distinction in all, even in the greatest difference of ranks.

The Crown-prince danced with a young lady of the citizen class; and Prince Carl with —, our little new friend, who had feared so much that this evening she should not dance at all, and who now, on the hand of the young prince, beamed with the charm of youth and innocent lovely delight.

She was pointed out as the eldest daughter of the wholesale dealer M——. In my own mind I saw her thinking, "What will my sisters say to this?"

Lennartson danced with Flora, Selma with Felix Delphin; and as I now saw my stepmother again more satisfied and drawn into conversation by a lady of condition, I began to use my eyes and ears more freely, that I might seize upon and collect whatever the occasion offered.

The ball was beautiful; the world, thought I, tolerably like what I had seen it almost a dozen years before; old acquaintance were, for the most part, like themselves also. Time had merely wandered with light footsteps over most countenances, and had dug in a few wrinkles. Upon two faces only with which I was acquainted, I saw written a marked history—a development; the one for good, and the other for bad. For the rest, I saw many agreeable forms among the young of both sexes. People say that ugliness

and stupidity vanish more and more out of the world. Good luck to the journey!

To the right of me I heard the two young Bravanders in quiet conversation together, and heard one of them say:

“No! a thousand devils take and broil me——”

And the other replied:

“Oh! the devil fetch me! the devil in hell fetch me!”

And the first continued:

“No, seven thousand tuns curse my soul!”

And the other chimed in:

“Yes, the devil fetch and govern me!”

An old, well-dressed gentleman, with a somewhat sarcastic look, now came up to the speakers, and wished them, with a smile, “Good speed.”

On my left hand I heard Hilda and Thilda Engel talking about the gentlemen who had just been conversing, thus. Hilda said:

“Ah!” he is so sweet, Alex Bravander, with his handsome eyes and his little pointed beard. Heavens! how sweet he is!”

Thilda. “And his brother there! he is according to my taste no less sweet. And how he waltzes! Quite divine! He has engaged me for the second waltz! Ah! he is such a sweet fellow!”

Hilda and Thilda together. “Ah, they are so sweet, so sweet, so sweet!”

Oh! thought I, we have not yet got rid of the ugly and the stupid!

I was interrupted in my observations by a middle-aged lady of a lively and good exterior, who saluted me with a friendly zeal, and taking my hand, exclaimed:

“Ah! my best Mada—Miss—Mrs.—pardon me; I have forgotten the title. I wish you a good new year! How charming it is to see Mada—Miss—home again. And how may be the sweet Lady-District-Governess—I mean Miss—I mean your Honour’s Lady stepmother?” I was conscious that I very well knew the person who thus addressed me, but I could not at the moment recal to mind either her name or rank, and therefore in consequence of the incomprehensible etiquette of our social intercourse, I found it impossible to address her as *you* or *she*. I was therefore in the greatest

perplexity, as she seemed so certain of our perfect acquaintance. Whilst I secretly vexed myself about this defect and this bad custom among us, I seized upon, as it seemed to me, the brilliant idea of calling my unknown acquaintance "Your honour." At this she looked somewhat confounded, and our conversation fell, as it were, to the ground, till the Signora Luna, who had now finished her attendance on the Queen, came to us, and after having given me a hearty shake of the hand, addressed my great personage thus: "Ah, good day to you, Archdeaconess R.! A good new year to you! How is the Archdeacon?"

"I thank you my gracious Barone—or Countess, who are so good as to ask. I hope the Baro—I would say Count—pardon me, I am so unlucky as never to remember titles and names. Is it not Countess that I should say?"

"Could we not simply address one another as *you*?" asked Signora Luna, smiling; "we then should get rid of a deal of embarrassment; and, as you know, Kellgren says, 'the simpler the better.'"

"Ah, if that could but be!" exclaimed the Archdeaconess, brightening up, "that would really be a blessed thing! For me especially, who have so wretched a memory, and am so mortified to be discourteous. But could one really do so?"

"I see nothing in the world which can hinder it," answered "our lady of the bright eyes," "if we, the Archdeaconesses, the Baronesses, the Countesses, and ladies of all degrees, determined to carry it through. For you know, indeed, that God wills what the women will. Is it not so, my best Chief Master of the Ceremonies?" continued she, turning herself to the ornate old gentleman just mentioned; "does it not seem to you, Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies, that Mr., the Chief Master of the Ceremonies himself, and we all should have an easier life of it here in Sweden, if we, like all polished nations, availed ourselves of the manner of addressing one another which our language offers us; if we employed our honest Swedish *you*, instead of these everlasting titles? It actually frightens me from talking with the 'Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies,' when I bethink me that I must address Mr. the Chief Master of the Ceremonies with the title of Mr. the Chief Master of the Ceremonies, and that it may return every minute and hinder all that which these

Masters of the Ceremonies ought to do for my tongue and my meaning. And now I promise to talk no more with a Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies, unless the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies gives me leave to address the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies with a simple *you*, and that I can hear the Mr. Chief Master of the Ceremonies address me in the same style."

"You are perfectly right, my gracious one," smilingly replied the polite old gentleman, "and if you can make your proposition general amongst mankind, you will have rendered a great service to Sweden. I really cannot conceive why at Court and in society we should be less European than in the Swedish academy, where we with the greatest freedom address each other with *you*, a word which is of equally good tone and has an equally fine sound with the Frenchman's *vous*, the Englishman's *you*, the German's *sie*, and the *de* of our Scandinavian brothers."

"That is excellent!" exclaimed Signora Luna. "Thus then we make a contract on this New Year's-day to introduce *you* into our social and every-day life, and a new and better time shall thereby arrive, both for speech and writing in Sweden. Let me now present to you these two ladies, my very good friends; I do not tell you whether they be ladies or Mrs. only, but that they are very charming people, and you shall address them with *you*, and they shall address you with *you* likewise. Now I leave you to make a nearer relationship through pro and con."

And we talked together, and it went off both easily and well. The nimble and the light in our new nomenclature, as it were, gave wings to the conversation, and I found the Chief Master of the Ceremonies one of the most interesting old gentlemen, and the Archdeaconess one of the most excellent and most lively Archdeaconesses in the world.

The dancing in the mean time went on, but as is usual at these New-year assemblies, without any particular life. People collect here rather to see and be seen; rather to greet one another with "a happy New Year!" and to talk with one another, rather than to dance. Towards eleven the royal party went into the large drawing-room on the right, to receive and to reply to the compliments of the diplomatic corps. When they re-entered the saloon they began to

make the great round of it, and I actually pitied them for the many unmeaning words which they must address to and hear from the many hundreds of people unknown to them. Yet the procession was beautiful and splendid to look at. The gorgeous dress of the Queen (she was almost covered with jewels) and her courteous demeanour occasioned deep bows and curtseys; people looked up with so much pleasure to the high and noble figures of the Crown-princess and her husband, and nobody noticed without joy and hope the two young tall slender princes; the one so brown and manly, the other fair and mild, and both with the bloom of unspoiled youth upon their fresh countenances.

My eye, however, riveted itself especially upon the Crown-princess. I remember so well how I saw her twenty years ago make her entry as bride into Stockholm; how I saw her sitting in the gilded coach with transparent glass windows; the delicate figure in a dress of silver gauze, a crown of jewels on her head, with cheeks so rosy and eyes so heavenly blue, so beaming, greeting the people who filled the streets and houses, and who thronged themselves around her carriage, and with an unceasing peel of shouted huzzas saluted in her the young lovely hope of the country. She was the sun of all eyes, and the sun of heaven looked out in pomp above her. Certainly, the heart of the young princess must have beaten high at this universal homage of love and joy—at this triumphal procession into the country—into the hearts of the people. Life has not many moments of such intense splendour.

Signora Luna has told me, that when towards the end of the procession through the city, the princely bride came before the royal castle, and the carriage drove thundering through the high arched gateway, she suddenly bowed her head. When she raised it again her eyes were full of tears—she entered her future habitation with silent devotion.

I thought of all this as the royal train approached us by degrees. I thought how the hopes which the young princess had then awakened, were fulfilled; how her life since then had passed; thought how she had worked on in quiet greatness, as wife and mother—as the protectress of noble manners—as the promoter of industry—as the helper of the poor and suffering; as she now stood there an honour to her

religion, to the land where she was born—to the people who now called her theirs,—and I loved and honoured her from the depths of my heart. I thought that I saw in her large expressive eyes that she felt the annoyance of the empty speeches which she had to make and to hear, and it seemed to me absurd, that merely for the sake of etiquette, not one cordial word should this evening reach her ear. I therefore let my heart emancipate itself, and greeted her with a “God bless your Highness!” The large eyes looked at me with some amazement, which however now took a colouring of friendship, as she pleasantly greeting us, past by and paused at Selma, whom she knew, and with whom she spoke with the utmost familiarity for some time, pleased, as it seemed, with the graceful and easy manner of my young sister. The Queen and my stepmother spoke French together, as if they had been youthful acquaintance. The Crown-prince talked with Lennartson, who now for some time had joined us. All this produced a somewhat important halt of the royal train, and its delay with us drew all eyes, with a certain curiosity, upon us. Scarcely had the royal party left us when the Gyllenlöfs, as if struck by a sudden light, hastened up to us with the warmest friendship, and invited us at last to join their party. Seats were procured for us near the platform; we must of necessity follow them up the saloon. My stepmother, always soon reconciled, allowed herself to be persuaded; we went—we arrived—the Silfverlings found us to be their equals, and we had seats. My stepmother had a deal of politeness and many welcomes to answer. Selma declined three invitations to dance with the young Silfverlings, and I now understood what she meant by spasmodic acquaintances.

Shortly afterwards, when the royal party had left the assembly, we left it also. The unfortunate philosopher had forgotten Flora’s over-shoes, at which Flora was very angry and unhappy. Selma prayed her warmly to take hers, and Flora did so after some opposition. Lennartson seemed hurt and displeased at this; my stepmother uneasy. Contrary to all my prayers, I could not induce Selma to make use of mine.

We were kept for a good while standing in the lobby by the crush of people. Lennartson threw his cloak before

Selma's feet, and obliged her to set them upon it, that she might not suffer from standing upon the cold floor. His anxiety called forth the hateful, envious expression into Flora's eyes. St. Orme observed her quite calmly, whilst he showed himself very polite towards her. He gave her his arm, Lennartson conducted my stepmother, the Chamberlain me. Here we came in collision with Aunt Pendelfelt, who, in an affected and formal manner, said half aloud to Flora:

"Now, my sweet friend, when may one congratulate you, if I may ask?"

Flora assumed an astonished and unfriendly look—but St. Orme answered laughing, "Quite certainly in the next new year!" Lennartson, on this, looked at him with an inquiring and sharp glance. St. Orme looked another way. Flora seemed to set her teeth together. Aunt Pendelfelt turned herself now to Selma and Felix, as it seemed, with a similar question, which Selma sought earnestly to avoid, and begged Felix to go forward. At that moment the throng of people opened itself, and we were at liberty. In the carriage, my stepmother and I emulated each other in wrapping Selma's feet up in our shawls and cloaks.

At home, and during a light supper, we were all again in good humour, and amused ourselves with projecting all kinds of improbable plans for the future. We laughed a deal; but at a whisper of St. Orme's, Flora became suddenly gloomy and grave. At the same time I was aware of telegraphic signs between my uncle and my stepmother, which put me somewhat out of temper, and as we were about to part on this first day of the year, several of us were something out of humour; but Selma, good and joyous, and full of joke, prevented all vexatious stiffness, and amid merry "happy wishes," we said to each other "Good night!"

And thus is it in our life,—in our home here in the North, we live much with, and among one another, and not unfrequently the unfriendly is excited, we are disturbed and put into "ill humour," and must endeavour again to pacify this at home and in ourselves, for we cannot do it out of ourselves, as in the rich South. Therefore it is so beautiful, when a tone of love and joy goes through the house like a key-note. Then the dissonances die away by degrees, and

we can say in peace to one another and to life—"Good night!"

The 7th.

Good morning, life! A lovely, bright day; snow lies upon the southern mountains, and shines dazzlingly white against the clear blue horizon. Yet it is not very cold, and the sun bathes with a flood of light, palaces and cottages, waves and shore, men, animals, and statues. Sea-gulls shining white, swing themselves over the Nordstream, where the water of the lake, with its thirteen hundred islands, breaks into the salt sea, and foamingly intermingles with its waters.

This stream plays a part in my life. Its roaring is my cradle song of an evening, when I rest upon my bed. In the morning it affords me my bathing water, and, by its wild fresh odour, by its strengthening cold, awakens feelings of the life by the Kautua stream; feelings fresh with youth, full of life's enjoyment. In its rushing waters I see the first glimmer of light, when I from my window salute the new day.

Light! water! these primeval gifts of the Creator to earth, which still to-day are here for all mankind.—Why do we not acknowledge more your power of blessing? Why are we not baptized every day by you to new life, and courage, and gratitude?

I have stood at my open window, and with full respiration have drunk in the fresh air, which, together with the sunshine, streams into my chamber. I have had joyful thoughts.

I remember the Polish nobles, who in the past summer visited Sweden, and what was their peculiar feeling of esteem for this country.

"A country never conquered by a foreign power; a people who through their own strength have asserted their own independence!" said they, with an expression of pleasure and melancholy (melancholy over their own poor fatherland). And I softly sang from Malmström's beautiful glowing song "The Fatherland," words which often come into my thoughts, and sang them with love.

Thou poor, thou sterile Swedish earth,
Shall famine cast thee down?

* * * *

Thou honour-crowned Fatherland,
Where old sea-marks abide;
Thou lofty cliff-encircled strand,
Washed by the faithful tide.—
Thou joyous home, thou peaceful shore,
God stretched in love and pleasure o'er
Thee his Almighty hand!

I thought also on my own, now so happy independence. O freedom! how charming is the enjoyment of thee after long years of captivity.

Thus thought I on something which is dear to me, and which remains ever more sure. I feel that I am come into an ever-improving, a more and more harmonious relationship to my fellow-creatures. Since it has become light in my own soul, and I am by this means come more “into equipoise” in life; since I am at peace with myself; no longer hotly wishing to please others, and no longer seeking so much for their approbation and their love—since that time I please them much more, and find in them much greater pleasure. Since I have, above all things, seen both in man and woman—the human being, and since I to them have spoken as such, I have had towards mankind, and mankind has towards me, a certain *thou* affinity of feeling, a certain relationship, as of the children of one parent, which has opened our souls to each other, and has beautified life. In one word, I acknowledge ever more intelligibly that human love is my proposition.

Two people come in this way nearer and nearer to my heart, Selma and Wilhelm Brenner, my young sister and—my friend. Selma makes me happy by her tenderness, by her joyous harmonious being. She has at once laid aside the satirical mask, which disfigured her pure features, and her natural wit appears to me on that account only the more agreeable. Satire may play even upon the lips of an angel, and even the merry and witty may be handmaids in the house of our Lord. Does He not let this be seen in nature? Scatters He not over field and wave, among clouds and stars, millions of joyful sallies and rich bursts of laughter, which lighten forth both in sunny and gloomy hours, and enliven the spirits of his creatures?

Wilhelm Brenner, the Viking—why do I feel at thoughts of him as it were sunshine in my heart? Love,

however, it is not, that I know decidedly ; but my acquaintance with him gives me joy.

Latterly I have often seen him, and feel myself always well in mood when I am near him. I talk to him willingly of my Finnish fatherland ; of the wild natural characteristics of Aura ; of its peculiar people and manners ; its strange mythological songs and legends, with magic arts and powerful PRIMEVAL WORDS—the keys to the being of things—of my own first childhood on its foaming pearl-rich streams, in the shade of its alders.

How kindly, nay, how willingly he listens to me ; how well he replies to my thoughts, my feelings—now seriously, now gently jesting ! Many times I request that he should call forth some remembrances out of his restless life, pictures of another climate, of seas and wildernesses, of glowing Africa and strange Egypt ; scenes from the battle-fields around Atlas. It is rare that he will relate anything of this ; but when he does how curiously and desiringly I listen ! These pictures are so grand, and, I acknowledge, something grand also in the nature which has conceived them.

And what feeling is it indeed which leads the Viking to seek so openly and so cordially intercourse with me ? Love ? No ! I do not think so ; and will not think so ; at least not in the sense in which people generally accept this word. The tolerably current pretence, that man and woman only under the influence of this feeling approach one another cordially, is not just. They seek, they need one another because they admire a peculiar kind of excellence in each other. He finds in her the inspirations of life, she sees her world illuminated in him ; and thus they find, through one another, the harmony of life, the fulness of life.

This I have thought to-day by my clear heaven, by my clear, fresh air.

The horizon of the family has exhibited itself to the New Year pretty free from clouds. My stepmother is entirely in good humour amid a host of New-year's visits, which drop in every day. This has prevented her and me from clashing in any important quarrel ; yet since the emancipation-question we have been rather more ceremonious towards each other, and my stepmother seems to suspect tricks and un-

easy machinations under many of my entirely innocent assertions.

The 11th.

St. Orme comes hither sometimes early in the morning, and desires to speak alone with my stepmother. She always looks disturbed at this; and when she returns from these conferences, she is always annoyed and uneasy till some new impression removes this. I suspect that their private conversations have reference to money which St. Orme borrows. May the good-nature of my stepmother not bring her into embarrassment. I have heard that which is bad spoken of St. Orme's affairs, of his life and connexions. Felix also may be misled by St. Orme's sophisms, and by the example of his friends, the Rutschenfelts, into evil ways. I have spoken with Brenner of my suspicions respecting St. Orme; but the Viking takes the field for him, and is, since his residence in Paris, under obligations to him, which makes him unwilling to believe anything bad of him.

The 13th.

My bad suspicions have their entirely good, or I will say, bad foundation. Hellfrid Rittersvård wrote a note to Selma this morning, wherein she asked a loan of fifty rix-dollars. She needed this sum to pay the pension of her youngest brother, and would be able to repay it in two months. With eyes flashing with desire to gratify Hellfrid's wish, Selma showed the letter to her mother, and prayed her to advance the desired sum, which she had not now herself.

"With infinite pleasure, my beloved child!" exclaimed my stepmother, who is always ready to give; hastened to her writing-desk, and opened the drawer where she usually keeps money; but suddenly she appeared to recollect something, and turned pale. She took out a purse, which a few days before was full of heavy silver-pieces, put in her hand instinctively, but drew out merely a few rix-dollars. A painful confusion painted itself on her countenance, as she said, almost stammering, "Ah! I have not—I cannot now! St. Orme has borrowed all my money. He promised to bring it me back again in a few days, but—in the mean time—how shall we manage it?"

My stepmother had tears in her eyes; and her troubled appearance, her pale cheeks—I sprang immediately up to my

chamber, and came down again quickly with a few *canary-birds* (so my stepmother and Selma, in their merry way, call the large yellow bank-bills; whilst the others, just according to their look and their value, have the names of other birds).

Selma embraced me, and danced for joy at the sight of the yellow notes. But my stepmother took them with a kind of embarrassment—a dissatisfied condescension, which somewhat grieved me. She promised that I should soon receive back the bills. And if I “must borrow from her, I might be sure that,” and so on.

Her coldness cooled me. In the mean time we governed the state together in the afternoon, and handled “the system,” and other important things, I will not venture to say exactly according to what system if not—according to the system of confusion. My thoughts were in another direction. They followed Felix and Selma. He seemed to wish to speak to her alone, and she seemed on the contrary to wish to avoid him, in which also she succeeded.

The 15th.

To-day, Felix came hither early in the forenoon. I was alone with Selma, in the inner drawing-room. She was arranging her flowers at the window. After a conversation of a few minutes with me, Felix approached her. Selma went to the other window; Felix followed. Selma would have escaped into the other room, when Felix placing himself in the doorway, barred her progress and exclaimed, beseechingly:

“No! now Selma can no longer avoid me! Give me a moment’s conversation, if you do not wish that I should be altogether desperate.”

A deep crimson overspread Selma’s countenance; a feeling of anguish seemed to seize upon her soul! but she struggled with herself, and whilst she looked down at a monthly rose, which she held in her hand, she seemed to wait for that which Felix had to say to her. I thought I ought to go, and leave the two young people to explain themselves to each other, and—I went, but not without secret disquiet.

In the saloon I found my stepmother in secret conference with the Chamberlain. She looked more Metternich-like

than ever. I seemed as though I noticed nothing, and went up to my chamber, when I soon received a visit from Hellfrid Rittersvärd. And out of this visit came quite unexpectedly a confidence which——Now, now, my gracious diplomatic Lady Stepmother, I can also have my state secrets. To my Diary, however, I can very well confide, that Hellfrid Rittersvärd, after much consideration and after much anxiety and pain, had yielded to the faithful devotion and prayers of Åke Sparrsköld, and had promised to belong to him whenever their personal circumstances allow of a union. This may, it is true, withdraw itself to a great distance. Before Sparrsköld gets his company it is not to be thought of, and Captain Rummil, his superior, remains probably yet a long time in his post as head of the company.

Hellfrid was uneasy, and wished to know from me whether she had done well or ill. I said "Well," and that made her happy.

It was two hours before I could again visit Selma. As I came into the drawing-room where I had left her, it was empty, but I saw that some one had lain upon the sofa, and had supported their head upon the soft pillow. I picked up a fallen rose, and saw in its bright-red bosom shining tears. Uneasy in mind, I went farther and sought for Selma. I found her in her chamber.

Her eyes gleamed as they are wont to do when she weeps, and sighs heaved her breast. She soon opened her heart to my tenderly-anxious questions, and I learned her secret feelings and thoughts.

Felix had reproached Selma with the coolness and unfriendliness which she had shown to him for some time; had told her that this made him unhappy, that he should be lost if she were not different towards him. He confessed his weakness of character—his folly—but Selma could save him if she would, could make of him a worthy, happy man. He prayed that she would confer her hand upon him, and make that reality at which they had so long played. As Selma's husband Felix would be quite another kind of person. "Ah!" continued Selma, "he spoke so beautifully and so warmly of that which I might be to him, and of what he himself could and would be, that I had not the heart to withstand his prayers and promises. But I set fast a time of trial for him,

after which—I have always liked Felix; he has a good heart, and so many amiable qualities; but he is weak, and for some years, since he has been of age, he has shown himself so trifling, so little to be trusted!—We have been so dissatisfied with him. But he may change, he may become better, and then——”

“Then you will make him happy, Selma?”

“Yes!”

“And you weep?”

“Yes! I know not why.”

“I do not believe that Felix would, if he could, take your feelings by storm.”

“Oh, that he certainly would not. But he thinks, perhaps, that I love him more than I really do; and that only temper in me, or his fickle behaviour occasioned my coolness. From our childhood upwards it has been a sort of understood thing in our families that we were to be married, and we were looked upon as almost betrothed. Felix has always wished for this union, my mother the same, and I have had nothing against it till I became better acquainted with myself. I now know very well that I never can love Felix properly, because I cannot highly esteem him, as I will and must highly esteem my husband; but——”

“But what, my sweet Selma?”

“If I can make him and others happy, then—neither shall I myself be unhappy. And then—God will give me, perhaps, a child, which I can love, and in which I can have pleasure in the world.”

With this Selma wept quite softly, leaning on my shoulder.

I wished to know what Selma had actually promised to young Delphin.

“I have prayed him,” replied she, “for one whole year not to speak of his love, but to prove it to me in actions and behaviour. Should I be in this manner convinced that his affection for me is actually as great as he says, then I will, when the year of trial is over, consent to be his bride. That I have promised. Felix desires now nothing more; he prayed only for a ring, which he might wear on his hand as a memorial of this hour and of his promise. I gave him the ring with the sapphire. He was so happy, so glad! Ah, Sophia! I must be happy too, since I have done that which is right, and have perhaps saved a human being.”

And again Selma's eyes beamed with pure joy, although through a haze of tears. I rejoiced heartily in her prudence and goodness, but still felt myself quite melancholy on her account.

The 18th.

"Invited out for the whole week!" With these words my stepmother met me this morning, and her countenance showed an intelligible pleasure through an assumed light veil of well-bred weariness and tedium of the world! I exhibited not the least sorrow, especially as I saw my stepmother and the two girls taken up in the highest degree with the thoughts and business of the toilet. I feel myself fortunate to escape these molestations, and in being able to stay at home. My stepmother persuaded me, indeed, a very little "to go with them." But it is not in right earnest.

The 21st.

Among all these dissipations which reign in the house; amid all those beautiful toilets and artificial flowers, and all these so-called pleasures, still strange symptoms break forth, which testify of the volcanic soil upon which they dance.

Flora has been for several days as changeable in her temper as in her dress; and it has seemed to me, as if she by these changes endeavoured merely to fetter Lennartson's attention, or more correctly, to charm him, and his eye follows her too with attention, but rather with the gravity of the observer than with the expression of the enraptured lover. It seems to me sometimes, as if with all these changes of Flora's he asked, "Which is the true?" and so ask I also; because, whilst she evidently endeavours to draw Lennartson to herself, she disdains not several by-conquests, and keeps these up also with her charms and her endeavours. St. Orme plays the while an apparently indifferent part, but is often betrayed by his crafty glance. He watches her secretly.

Among the pictures in the inner drawing-room there is a beautiful portrait of Beatrice Cenci, the unfortunate fratriicide. To-day Flora stood before it, and observed it long, sunk in silent thought. I looked at her, for she was beautiful, as she stood there with an Undine-garland of coral and white water-lilies in her brown hair, and in a dress of that chameleon-like changing-coloured material, which this year is so much the mode. All at once she broke silence and said:

"Can you tell me, wise Philosophia! why I find pleasure in this picture; in studying this Beatrice Cenci?"

"Probably because she is so touchingly beautiful," said I.

"No! but because she was so firm and determined. Such people refresh the mind—especially, when we are disgusted by the undecided, weak, characterless people who are now so abundant in the world. What think you of Beatrice?"

"I deplore her from my whole heart. It must be horrible to hate the author of one's own life."

"Yes, indeed, horrible!" interrupted Flora warmly. "Yes, it is horrible to hate one's parents, but horrible also, if one were compelled to despise them."

Flora with this hid her face in her hands. I looked at her with astonishment and sympathy.

"Ah!" continued she with excitement, "let no one say that it is a matter of indifference what song is sung beside a child's cradle; it sounds through his whole life. Lennartson, Selma, why are they so good, so wholly good; and I, why am I so?—And yet,—Sophia! I am no ordinary person!"

I was silent, and Flora continued, while she looked sharply at me:

"I know that you never can like me, and that you never did me justice, but still you will not say that I am an *ordinary* person."

"Extraordinary and beautifully gifted are you in all things," replied I, "but perhaps you are in reality less extraordinary than you fancy yourself to be. For the rest, dear Flora, I cannot judge you, because I do not yet know you. You are often so unlike yourself—you are, as if you were not one, but two—nay, several persons."

"Nor am I *one* person!" replied Flora; "I have a double being, one good, and one bad, that always casts its spells around me; that is my other I, and follows me like my shadow, and places itself between me and all truth, by day and by night; abroad and at home; when I laugh and when I weep; at the ball and in the church,—yes, even in church it places itself between me and heaven! How is it then possible that I can have peace—that I can be saved? Ah! would that I were a little grey sparrow of the field?"

"And why a sparrow?" asked I.

"Because then nobody would trouble themselves about me, and would know nothing of me——But hush! I feel in me that one of my bad demons is near!"

"Let him obtain no power over you!" prayed I warmly and zealously.

"He has power!" said Flora, with a horrible expression, "and I stand on the brink of an abyss! and soon——soon enough shall I be precipitated down, if not——" she was silent; light footsteps made themselves audible in the outer drawing-room, and St. Orme entered. Immediately afterwards came my stepmother and Selma, and all went together to supper at the Silfverlings.

The 23rd.

New and distinguishing tokens! My stepmother has her Metternich demeanour, and the telegraph movements between her and the Chamberlain go on. I suspect strongly a complot against my precious freedom. "Must go cautiously and a little diplomatically to work," I heard my stepmother say, softly, this day to my uncle; "you have not let Sophia suspect anything?"

"No; but I feel my way in a delicate manner; confide yourself to me; I understand the ladies," replied he.

To that end my stepmother plagues me with encomiums on the Chamberlain, and the Chamberlain with questions as to my taste in furniture; for example, with regard to the form of tables and bookcases, and so forth. He wishes, he says, in the furnishing of two new rooms that they should be wholly arranged according to my taste. But what is his furniture to me? If my stepmother sings my uncle's praise, he is no less generous in praise of her.

"She is one of the most superior ladies that I know," said he again to-day; "a tact, a judgment, a discretion! Ah! one can confide everything to her; and I, for my part, when I will do a little good in secret, I know no one whom I would so willingly, and with the most perfect assurance can, make my confidant."

I began over all this to become impatient.

People talk of the marriage of Brenner with a young, lovely, and rich widow. This has a little annoyed me. Brenner's behaviour appears to me strange. Why has he

not spoken to me of this connexion? I am his friend—his sisterly friend. And why?—I cannot endure anything enigmatical in him: but perhaps it is unjust in me so to regard it.

The 24th.

My stepmother and I are on cool terms. Her attempt to impose upon me is repulsed; I am proud, and show my sense of freedom in a not particularly amiable manner. Dissatisfied looks from Flora; uneasy and beseeching ones from Selma. General discomfort. If this should continue, it will be very entertaining!

Ah! they say that life stands still if no outward circumstances excite and move it. But it is not so. It seems to me that it is in such quiet times that the angels of heaven listen to human life most attentively—for then tremble the strings in its innermost depths—then are its finest nerves developed—then that which increases the power of heaven or of hell fashions itself.

At the moment in which the butterfly develops its wings it is quite calm in the secure resting-place which it has selected. In the moment of change its life appears altogether to be an inward one. But the beaming butterfly of day and the nocturnal death's-head moth are children of the same quiet summer-hour.

A ramble out. A hateful, disagreeable day; the people red-blue, heaven leaden-grey; icicles at all the houses; loose, trampled-up snow, half an ell deep in the streets; vexatious thoughts, displeasing feelings! Yet——“EVEN THIS WILL PASS OVER!” was the proverb which the wise Solomon gave to an Eastern prince, who desired from him such a motto as would make the soul strong in misfortune, and humble in prosperity; and this motto will I make mine.

The 26th.

I went down yesterday to dinner with the virtuous determination of being complaisant towards my stepmother, and kind towards everybody. But it was the reverse with me; I entered the inner drawing-room, and saw my stepmother and the Chamberlain sitting on the sofa, in confidential and whispered discourse, which they suddenly broke off on my approach. My stepmother seemed very good-humoured, and soon came up to me, and said significantly, as she arranged

something in my dress, "I must tell you, that we have just had a long conversation about you and sundry of your concerns—um, um, um!"

"On what concerns?" asked I, with a look as if I would not at all understand it.

"Oh yes, yes; about certain concerns which everywhere have their importance; um—um—um!" said my stepmother, smiling. And then she began a little speech about its being so pleasant to her to see every one about her happy; how all her thoughts and her endeavours tended to that; how she thought not at all about herself, how she merely lived for others, and so on. I thought on the bitter recollections of my youth, and assumed a north-pole demeanour on the throne-speech of my stepmother.

We went to dinner. The Chamberlain was "*aux petit soins*" on my account, and divided the best morsels between himself and me, which had no relish for me. To the most polite observations of my stepmother I answered also coldly, and avoided Selma's looks, which seemed to ask, "What, have we offended you?" At dinner, youth was praised as the golden age; the Chamberlain said that he had in youth "rightly intoxicated himself from the cup of enjoyment." I said, that my bitterest remembrances were precisely out of my youth; remembrances which even to this day operated disturbingly on my temper. I saw, by the uneasy looks of my stepmother, that she felt this as a reproof to herself. But I had the feeling as if a heavy avalanche lay upon my heart.

In the afternoon, as I was making a little collar, I expressed some vexation that I had no lace with which to trim it. My stepmother hastened instantly to her room, and soon returned with a quantity of beautiful lace, which she playfully threw round my neck, as she prayed me to accept it for love; and I felt myself clasped in her arms, felt her soft breath on my cheek, and she whispered to me archly, that "my passion for emancipation should not prevent her from holding me fast." In my present Spitzbergen-mood of mind I recognised nothing in this embrace but an attempt to circumscribe my liberty, and therefore I released myself coolly, and even threw away the lace, because "it did not suit me; I would get for myself what I wanted."

My stepmother silently went with her disdained gift back

to her room; and as Selma a moment afterwards followed her, I could see, through the open door, how she leaned against the window, looked out silent and sorrowfully, and it seemed to me that tears were on her cheeks.

This sight went to my heart; and whilst I secretly reproached myself for my conduct, I went up to my chamber to be quiet, and to demand a reckoning with myself. But I could hardly recognise again my own room; so changed, so beautified was it. For a while I knew not where I was.

Among some handsome new furniture which had been arranged there, I beheld an extremely elegant mahogany bookcase, through whose bright glass windows a number of books in ornamental binding smiled upon me; and from the top looked down majestically a beautiful Minerva's head of bronze.

As an exclamation of astonishment escaped from me, I heard behind me a half-snorting, half-chirping sound; and when I turned myself round, I saw my delighted maid come forth from a window corner, when she could no longer conceal her sympathy with my amazement.

"Her Grace has long thought about this," told she now out of the fulness of her heart; "and the Chamberlain himself has had the bookcase carried up, and then Miss Selma has been here all the morning to arrange the things in order."

A revolution now took place in me. Perhaps I now saw here the aim of every private conversation, of every telegraphic movement, of every secret agreement, which, as I fancied, had been directed against my freedom. And they had reference merely to my well-being and my pleasure! Perhaps it was the thought of this my astonishment which had made my stepmother to-day in such high spirits. I fancied that I again felt her embrace, her breath upon my cheeks. And I? how had I met her? how had I suspected, mistaken, rejected her, and occasioned her tears!

With the speed of lightning I hastened down to my stepmother, and here——

I have a bias of a dangerous kind. If my feelings have become ice cold, and then are suddenly thawed by a ray of sunlight or dewdrop of life, then am I usually deluged by them as by a spring-flood, and am ready to deluge the whole

world with them. Nay, there exists no person whom in such moments I could not press to my heart; and for those who are dear to me I have only one feeling, the feeling of giving them all that I have, myself into the bargain. Seneca and Cicero, and Schlegel and Hegel, and the doctrines of all the wise men of the world on self-government, and quietness and moderation, are in such moments merely like oil upon a waterfall. Certain experiences have, it is true, brought me somewhat to control this rushing flood; but in certain moments nevertheless they will have their way, and the present moment was one of them. Yes, so deeply affected was I by the goodness of my stepmother, and so full of contrition for my own injustice, that—if she now had required that I should confer my hand on the Chamberlain—I should, I think, have done it. But, thanks be to my good stars! she thought not of that; and I could undisturbedly enjoy all the amenities of life which blossomed there, where human souls overflowed in intimacy and love towards each other.

I have silently vowed by Minerva's head never again to torment with unnecessary suspicion my stepmother and myself. I feel, therefore, a ship's load lighter at heart. I hear Selma joyfully sing. God bless the singing bird! Her song always celebrates the sunny hours of home. She resembles in this the singing birds of Sweden, who (Nilson relates in his *Fauna*) sing the sweetest after soft summer rain.

The 28th.

Continued rapture on my part over the bookcase, and so on. Increasing pleasure and increasing contentment on the part of my stepmother. Light on the fate of Europe, through my stepmother and me. Active trade with the Lady Councillors of commerce; one betroths, one marries, one strikes people dead; in one word, one cares for the success of the world. With all this, secret vexation in my soul. I have not seen the Viking for several days. He ought indeed, at least, to come and announce his betrothal to his friend.

The 29th.

To-day a ramble out. I met the Viking, who was angry, and quarrelled because we were out exactly then; and that I, if I also had been at home, and alone, received him not. I was rather proud at this assertion, and assumed a rather

frosty deportment, on which Brenner left me tolerably short and cold. Now, now—

I care for nobody, nobody,
And nobody cares for me!

Thank God! thus can I yet sing, and thus will I ever be able to sing.

I will have no vexation, no unnecessary vexation. I have had enough of that in my life, I have had it from feelings all too warm. I will have these no more. And therefore will I remain cold and calm, as the marble statues which we shall see by lamplight in the sculpture gallery to-night.

Eleven at night.

But when one sees between the cold marble statues and the pale flames of the waxlights a warmly-beaming human eye which rests with gentle sun-strength upon one—who can prevent the heart becoming warm and soft—prevent the gallery itself from being converted into a temple of the sun? Thus happened it to me, as in the Niobe Gallery, between Roman Emperors and Caryatides, I discovered—the Viking. As I met his eye I involuntarily extended my hand, and felt at the same moment his warm, true hand-pressure. Oh, we must still always continue friends! Brenner, however, did not join us. He seemed to have undertaken the protection of two ladies, one of whom was young and very pretty. “Perhaps she is his bride,” thought I. But I gave up this opinion as again and again I saw his eye between the marble statues directed to me with an expression which quietly did my heart good. The meeting of this glance, the sentiment of a deep sympathy with a warm and noble heart, gave to the ramble through this marble-hall on the arm of the Chamberlain an extraordinary charm. I felt my heart beat with a full, although calm life, amid these senseless statues; and the perhaps yet less feeling crowd of people, who in elegant dresses filled the galleries, were occupied rather as it seemed to me with the lighting-up, with the handsome dresses, with the Queen and her Court (who also were there), than with the masterpieces of art. But wherefore do I blame that? I myself thought more of the people than of the statues. Lennartson gave his arm to my stepmother, and directed his words and remarks particularly to Selma, who looked lovely,

but thoughtful; whilst Flora, on her brother's arm, in a kind of feverish endeavour seemed to wish by her person and her sallies to occupy all those around her. St. Orme, Baron Alexander, and a couple of other gentlemen followed her amid applause and admiration. She was very well dressed, and exceedingly lovely.

In the so-called Sergel's room my attention was drawn to three different models for the artist's group of Cupid and Psyche, because we saw so plainly in them the labour of a mind clearly to understand itself and possess itself of the life which he would express. In the first model the statues are ill-shaped, coarse, unpliant, soul-less, Egyptian-mummy-like; they lock themselves together in a block-like oneness. In the next they have already life and motion; but are yet without harmony, without beauty and higher unity. These they obtain first in their third formation, when the artist has won the victory, and the splendid figures express the combat of human passions, softened by divine grandeur and beauty. I seemed to see in these forms the whole development, as in humanity so in man, and happy in these thoughts I turned myself round with the necessity of communicating them to some one, who could or would understand me. I saw now in my neighbourhood only Flora, who with an expression of impatience and also of bitterness listened to St. Orme, who spoke to her in a low voice. As my eye met that of Flora, she said, suddenly breaking off, and in a joking tone, "What revelation has Sophia now had? Her eye glows as if she had discovered a new world."

"Merely a thought," replied I, "is become clear to me here." And, carried away by my feelings, I showed to her the three model-groups, told her what they had led me to think upon the development and perfecting of life, on the patience and strength of the true artist, which never rests till it has approached its goal, nor till it sees that its work is good.

St. Orme smiled sarcastically at my enthusiasm, but Flora listened to me attentively. Afterwards she said, "Sergel was fortunate; he was not hindered like many others in his development, was not hindered in working out his own perfection by"—she checked herself, and I continued inquiringly "by?"

"By the want of a great object," continued Flora, with a strong emphasis and with a bitter expression of countenance.

But, nevertheless, I saw this with joy, for I recognised the thoughts and the expression which at times flashed forth in Flora, and made me conscious of the existence of a higher spirit in her enigmatical being.

St. Orme yawned aloud, and began a depreciating criticism of the last group, which was meant to show the folly of my admiration, the imperfection of the artist, and the superiority of his own acuteness.

To me this criticism betrayed merely St. Orme's want of a noble mind. I felt myself also wounded by his scarcely courteous manner towards me; but I am so afraid in such cases of lowering myself by re-payment in like coin, or in permitting myself to be mastered by a little desire of revenge, that I listened to St. Orme in silence, without giving any sign of the displeasure which I felt. Yet I was glad to be liberated from it by the Viking, who having disposed of his ladies (God knows how), now came hastily to me to call my attention to the group of Oxenstjerna and History, and also to the remarkably noble and powerful countenance of the great statesman. In the joyous frank expression of Brenner, I perceived a feeling of fresh sea-air which often comes over me from this spirit. For the rest, he complained that he was wearied, that he had no taste for cold, lifeless figures.

It was nevertheless determined, that this evening the lifeless figures should reveal to me many depths of the living ones.

We were advancing to the marble gallery of Logård where Odin stands so commandingly, Endymion slumbers so sweetly, Venus jests with Love, Apollo plays upon the lyre, and all the Muses stand around him.

There the royal secretary, von Krusenberg, joined us, who bowing ceremoniously before gods and men, thus made himself perceived by us:

"It is certain that here one can say that one is in good company. One feels oneself really exalted by it."

"Yes," interposed Baron Alexander, "here one escapes at least the elbow-thrusts of the people; of the common herd which fills the streets and alleys."

Such expressions I cannot bear, and cannot hear them in silence. I replied therefore not quite courteously:

"I believe certainly, that among the so-called 'people,' one meets with honester and better individuals than among the heathen divinities. There is a deal of the 'herd' upon high Olympus."

As a church-weathercock might look down upon the paving-stones, so looked down the great Alexander on me, and St. Orme said sarcastically:

"Thus it may appear to those who do not enter into the spirit of antiquity, and do not understand how to grasp its works with an enlightened and unprejudiced eye. The Catechism is of no use here as a scale of judgment. The beautiful and the sublime must be measured by another standard."

"I think so too," said Flora. "The Grecian ideal ought not to be dragged down to the circle of our every-day virtues."

I felt that I crimsoned, for I found that I did not stand upon quite good ground against my adversary. I looked at Selma and she looked at Lennartson, and his calm glance rested upon me with an expression which animated and strengthened me. I was intending to reply and make my meaning more clear, when St. Orme continued:

"I, for my part, know not what more deserves our homage than the divine gifts of BEAUTY, GENIUS, STRENGTH! I know really nothing which have any value near them. The small, nameless virtues that swarm on the earth have none. No! therefore I beg to hold with the gods, or more particularly with the goddesses. With them one is always at home in a temple of beauty."

"Cultivation of genius!" said Lennartson, smiling, "and many think that this is very sublime and high-bred. But more sublime and more high-bred is the cultivation which looks with indifference on accidental, showy gifts, and inquires after merely the essential in man, the goodness and the earnestness of the will; which beholds in each man an elect genius, an heir of another, diviner home, a living thought of God, which ennobles him for the citizenship of an eternal kingdom, and conducts him there. One may do justice to the heathen point of view, yet with all propriety find its inferiority to the very highest, that is, to *Christianity*."

This was evidently said to extricate me out of my dilemma,

and it seemed to me as if the heathen divinities suddenly grew pale, or evaporated into ghost-like figures, and the great Alexander shrivelled up into a dwarf; von Krusenberg crept behind Odin, whilst Selma and I looked up with delight to Lennartson. St. Orme and Baron Alexander consoled themselves by communicating to each other their paltry thoughts on people who could make so much ado about an insignificant occurrence among insignificant beings, and would ascribe a world-historical signification to an event which had happened here two thousand years ago. "How foolish!"

I listened to the two gentlemen, and wondered that *great learning* could be so completely united to *great poverty of mind*.

The truth is, that I have found among simple youths and maidens, more *deep feeling* for the deep in life, than among a certain class of the learned.

Some time after this, we stood in the middle of the gallery, before a marble group, Cupid and Psyche. It represents Cupid about to leave Psyche in anger, who kneels and prays for forgiveness.

"How could one, like Cupid here, be so immovable to a beautiful supplicant like Psyche?" we heard von Krusenberg say.

"Yes," said Flora, whilst her eye sought that of Lennartson, "is it possible to repulse her, who loves so, and prays so, even if—if—she be culpable?"

"He must be a downright barbarian!" exclaimed von Krusenberg.

"I think," said Lennartson rather coldly, "that there are actions which one cannot, and ought not to forgive."

"Not even to a beloved one," whispered Flora, with a voice almost imperceptibly tremulous, "not even to a bride—a wife?"

"Least of all to her," said Lennartson mildly, but with emphasis; and with a serious, penetrating look on Flora.

Shortly afterwards some one seized my arm hastily and whispered, "Come with me! I am ill!"

It was Flora; she was pale as death. But the very moment when I was about to go with her (Felix was with Selma, and did not see us), in the same moment Lennartson stood by her side, and led her out of the crowd.

"A little fresh air! I faint!" stammered Flora. Len-

nartson opened the doors towards Logård's terrace, and we soon saw the starry heavens above our heads, and the wind of the winter-night blew cool on our cheeks.

Lennartson ordered one of the velvet-covered seats to be brought out for Flora, gave her a glass of water to drink, and showed her the tenderest care. I removed a few steps. The scene and the time were solemn. We stood as it were in the heart of the castle, whose high and gloomy walls surrounded us on three sides; the fourth opened to us the beautiful prospect over the harbour, with its wreath of mountains and inhabited islands, wholly concealed in the nocturnal twilight, lit only by the stars of heaven and the flickering lights of earth. The lights of the gallery threw broad stripes of light between the clipped trees upon the high terrace where we stood, and which were broken by the shadows of the tree-stems. I saw all this, whilst my ear involuntarily caught the words which were exchanged between two human beings, who seemed in this moment to approach the crisis of their strange connexion, the separating point in their lives.

I heard Lennartson ask something with a soft, almost loving voice, and Flora replied:

"Better—better *now!* oh, Lennartson, because you now look bright and gentle, like the heavens above us, and not like the cold marble images within."

Lennartson was silent. Flora continued, with greater emotion, "Lennartson, you are really as stern, as severe as he, as immovable as your words sound now. Ah, my God! tell me, how am I to understand you?"

"Flora," said Lennartson, also deeply affected, "I it is who might have asked you this question for some time; I it is who wish to understand you. If you love me——"

"More than everything—more than my life," interrupted Flora, vehemently.

"Good then!" continued Lennartson, taking both her hands into his, and bending himself over them, "if it be so, then—be open, be candid towards me. Explain to me——"

"Ah! all, all, whatever you will, Lennartson. But at a more suitable time. Here it is—so cold."

"Cold!" exclaimed Lennartson; "that is only an excuse. Be at least, for this once, candid, Flora. Your hands burn. You feel now no cold."

"No! my heart is warm, warm for you, Thorsten. And

therefore have patience with me. I love you so strongly, so childishly ;—yes, I am therefore afraid of you, Lennartson ; afraid of seeing you grave and stern. Oh, if I only knew that you rightly loved me, then I should not long be incomprehensible to you ! Oh, say, can you not love me so, at least, not for my love's sake ?”

That loving tone of Flora's was answered. I saw Lennartson bend himself lower before her, I heard—the doors of the gallery again open, and saw my stepmother, together with her party, come out, seeking uneasily for us.

On the arm of Lennartson, Flora again entered the illuminated gallery.

Had Flora now obtained a certainty from the heart of Lennartson, which she had not before ; had words been spoken which my ear had not perceived, but which had loosened the horrible bond by which Flora had been held captive ? This is certain, that a bright joy seemed to have elevated her whole being. Never was she more captivating, nor had Lennartson been more captivated by her charms. Selma looked gently but pale on them both, whilst St. Orme regarded either with a subtly-searching glance. This glance made me suspect that Flora's romance is still yet far from its termination, and that a new revolution may soon take place.

The 1st of February.

The revolution in Flora has taken place, and all is as dark as ever.

This forenoon I heard outside my chamber door various strange sounds, as of persons violently quarrelling. I went to know what it might be ; the little passage between Flora's room and mine was empty, but the door of Flora's outer room was half open, and through this I saw, to my astonishment, Flora endeavouring to release her hands from St. Orme, who held them forcibly. Both looked up to the window by which they stood.

“ Ah ! let me go !” besought Flora, warmly. “ Let me liberate it ! It will be soon too late ! See, the ugly spider has caught it already !”

“ Why must it not fly into the web ?” said St. Orme, with his cold scorn. “ Let it be. It will be interesting to see if it can liberate itself, whether it can escape. If not, then—*laissez faire la fatalité.*”

"Ah! it is already his prey! The poor wretch! Adrian, let me go!" (She stamped with her foot.) "You are a cruel, horrible man!"

"Because I will not mourn about a fly? The little fool, she has created her fate herself, and who knows whether after all she is so very unfortunate? And the spider! Who knows whether he be so cruel? He merely embraces the little fly."

At this moment a pair of fire-tongs was suddenly raised, which tore the spider's web, and separated the spider and the fly. This catastrophe was occasioned by me; I had, armed with the first best weapon which chance offered me, approached the combatants. At sight of me St. Orme released Flora, and exclaimed:

"See, there comes truly, as if from heaven, a saving angel! Pity is it only, that the noble deed comes too late."

And it was too late. The fly fell dead upon the window frame.

"But," continued St. Orme, "Sophia can very well write an elegy or moral observations, and thus it may be always a means of edification, and——"

Flora with her hands before her face sprang suddenly into the inner room. I followed her, and St. Orme went away, whistling an opera air upon the steps.

Flora gave herself up to such an outbreak of violence as I had never seen before. She tore her hair, cried, and threw herself with convulsive sighs and tears on the floor. I stood amazed and silent, and looked at her. Where now was the beautiful Flora? It was a fury that I saw before me. I offered her a glass of water; she emptied it hastily, and then became by degrees somewhat calmer.

"Dearest Flora," said I at length, "why this? How can the fate of a fly thus——"

"Fly?" exclaimed Flora; "do you think that I trouble myself about this? No, I mourn over myself. I, Sophia, I am this unfortunate fly. I shall be a prey of this——and he knows it, the horrible wretch, he enjoys it; he amuses himself in seeing this image of my fate, of my anguish—the cruel one, the detestable one, who——"

"But how? but why?" asked I, interrupting the tempest of names which Flora gave to St. Orme.

"Inquire not!" replied she impatiently. "I cannot say,

and it would serve no purpose. Ah! why are there not in our country those protecting institutions which Catholic countries are possessed of, where a person can escape from the world, from himself, and from others; nay, can be saved even from humiliation—where even the fallen woman, sustained by the Cross, can erect herself, and under the protection of heaven, can stand there purified and ennobled before the eyes of the world!”

And Flora was again beautiful, as she raised herself up and turned her glistening tearful eyes towards heaven. But this exaltation lasted but for a moment. Then continued she with renewed bitterness:

“And if he pursue me I will become Catholic; nay, I will become a Turk or a Fantee woman. I would adore the Virgin Mary, or Mahomet, or the Great Mogul, or the devil himself, or whatever it might be, if it would only free me from this man.”

“Your wish for a convent-life,” said I, smiling, “does not appear to me to be of the right kind. But, Flora, I imagined that you had given yourself up to a good and strong spirit—that you belonged to Thorsten Lennartson.”

“Belonged? yes, with my whole soul, with my whole heart, but——”

“Why do you not turn yourself to him with open heart, with full confession? He would free you.”

“So you say! Ah, you know not——Yes, if he loved me as I love him! But—ah, if I knew, if I rightly knew! Why are there no longer oracles, no sibyls, no witches or prophetesses, in the world, to whom one might go in one’s need, and from whom one could demand counsel, a hint, a glance into the future? But all that which is pleasant is dead now. How unbearable and flat and insipid is the world now, with its regularity, with its rationality. It disgusts me. I am disgusted with myself. Everything is nauseous and unbearable to me. Do not stand and look at me, Sophia! Leave me! I will not be a spectacle for you. I know that you hate me, but now I am indeed unfortunate enough. Let me, at least, be alone!”

“No! not now. Let me rule over you a little while, Flora! You will then better understand my hatred. I am just going out. Go with me. The snow without will fall coolingly upon your hot brow.”

I approached her, and began to arrange her hair.

"Do with me what you will!" said she, and remained passive. I assisted her to put on her winter dress, and silently we went together out into the free air.

It snowed and blew. We went towards the lowest quay down to the river, on the way to the North Bridge. Flora looked at the foaming waves.

"How they foam! how they struggle!" said she; "see, see how the waves now endeavour to heave themselves, and now are subjected from the other side, and are obliged to sink in their exasperation, because the Mälar stream proudly rushes over them. The poor waves! I should like to know whether they feel what it is so exactly to sink beneath oneself, to wrestle and to struggle, without hope of ever conquering."

"In a few days," said I, "the Mälar water will perhaps have lost its power, and the combating streams will have come into equipoise."

"Sometimes," said Flora, "it also happens that the angry waves obtain the upper hand, and rush over the others, and exasperate them. There is a retaliation."

We were again silent. I led Flora over the bridge and through the streets into the city. Here are the oldest memories of Stockholm; here is the heart of the Stockholm city, which also has the form of a heart; here flowed the blood of the nobles of Sweden in streams from the hand of Christiern; here the streets are narrow, the lanes dark; but here also is the Castle of Stockholm; and here lift themselves even now a mass of houses, which show by their inscriptions, cut in stone, the strong fear of God which built up in ancient times the realm of Sweden.

We went into a dark doorway, ornamented with statuary work, of one of those houses, which had stood for centuries, and over the doorway of which was inscribed a verse from the Psalms of David in old Swedish.

Flora was undecided: "Whither do you conduct me?" asked she, hesitating.

"To a witch," replied I.

"Are there yet witches in Sweden?" said Flora, following me. "But," continued she, somewhat disparagingly, "I have no confidence in the witches of our day, with their card and coffee-cup wisdom."

After we had mounted several steps, I opened a door, and

we entered a room where a young girl sate and sewed. I prayed Flora to wait for me here, and went into another chamber, the door of which was shut.

After some time I returned to Flora, and led her in with me.

I saw an expression of astonishment and curiosity depicted in her countenance, as her eyes riveted themselves upon the figure which, clad in a flowing black silk robe, sate in a large chair by the only window of the room, the lower part of which was shaded by a green curtain. The daylight streamed from the upper half of the window brightly down upon a countenance which was less consumed by age than by suffering, and whose strong and not handsome features stifled the idea that it had ever possessed charms, or that looks of love could ever have rested upon it. Yet this countenance was not without sun. It had a pair of eyes whose glance was not common. It was restless, and as it were vacillating towards indifferent things and objects. But if it were animated by a feeling or by a thought—and that often was the case—then it had beams that could warm, strength which could penetrate; for there lay in it great and deep earnestness. The hair, still beautiful, and of a dark brown, was drawn off the large brow. A plain snow-white lace-cap surrounded the pale, grave countenance. The unknown held the left hand, of an almost transparent delicacy, against her breast, in the other she had a pencil, with which she appeared to have been making observations in the margin of a large Bible.

The furniture of the room was so simple that it might have belonged to poverty, but all bore the stamp of neatness and comfort, which does not unite itself with poverty. A vase of fresh flowers stood upon the table, upon which lay books and manuscripts. Everything in the room was simple and ordinary; the large wonderful eyes alone which beamed there, awoke a feeling that this was the dwelling of a powerful life.

Flora seemed to receive an impression of this, as we neared the unknown, who greeted us with great friendliness, as she said, excusing herself, "Permit me that I remain seated!"

She invited us with the hand to seat ourselves upon the two cane chairs which stood near the table, and gave to us smiling a sprig of geranium from the flower-vase on the table.

Her earnest eyes riveted themselves upon Flora, who cast down hers, and appeared to struggle for the power to raise them again. I withdrew presently from that part of the room, and left the two together.

I heard the unknown say with a gentle, grave voice, "So young, so beautiful, and yet—not happy!"

Flora was silent a moment, and seemed to struggle with herself. At length she said:

"No! not happy," but—who can tell me how I may become so? Knew I any one who could tell me that, I would go to him through deserts and midnight; but oracles have vanished from the world."

"Not vanished, but only changed their abode," said the unknown, calmly.

"Changed their abode? To where?"

"From the ancient temples, from the deserts, have they removed into the most holy sanctuary of life, into the human soul."

"And thither," continued Flora, sarcastically, "it is indeed more difficult to come than to Delphi and Dodona. And what would now this new-fashioned oracle reply to my question? How shall I become happy?"

"Follow the inward voice!"

"A true oracular answer; that is to say, an answer that says nothing at all. I at least know nothing of *one* inward voice, but of ten, at least, which one after the other speak in me."

"One must not believe all voices; one must question and deeply listen till one hears the right voice."

"There are in the soul," said the unknown, in a friendly, smiling, insinuating manner, "quiet groves, silent grottoes, and temples—thither must we go. There speaks our genius." The unknown seemed to enjoy the pictures which she called forth.

It seemed to me as if a certain coolness had overflowed Flora's passionate soul at these words. With a sigh and a tearful eye she said:

"Oh! he who flees to this still region and there finds rest, must yet flee from the world and from himself!"

"He should not flee, he should only collect himself; collect himself in stillness, but for a great object in life."

Flora's thoughts before the sculpture of Sergel seemed to return to her; her look was animated.

"Ah!" said she, "I have sometimes imagined and thought, but—it is now too late. The unrooted flower can no longer keep itself firm; it must be driven by wave and wind."

"It is never too late," said the unknown, emphatically, "but it may often be difficult enough. Ah! I know it well, this flower without a root, this want of foundation and soil, which is commonly the fruit of a false education. No way is more difficult than the way to collect oneself out of dissipation and to become oneself, but still it may be found, and we may walk in it."

At this moment a sunbeam broke through the window, and streamed softly trembling through the flowers of the vase upon the pages of the holy book. The eye of the unknown followed the path of light, and shone with great delight as she spoke in broken sentences:

"No! it is never too late to tread the bright paths which unite heaven and earth and mankind to each other in noble endeavours. They open themselves in our days richer than ever, and in all directions—in all spheres of life—and the eyes of men become more and more open, and love refuses not his guiding hand! Courage only and a resolute will, and the apparently unrooted plant will take root firmly, and will bloom forth beautifully in the light of the Eternal!"

Flora followed not. As the spirit of the unknown thus raised itself towards the light, Flora's spirit seemed to sink and to look down into the darker depth.

"And after all," said she, gloomily, "everything is yet vanity. Every human life has its snake, against which no power can combat. Sooner or later a time comes to every one in which all pleasure is at an end, in which one is subjected to pain, to old age, to death! Is there no power, no bliss, which this can withstand?"

"Yes! let a dying one assure you of this. See you! I go now with rapid speed towards my change, and great are my sufferings; yet I am so happy that day and night I must sing praises. Many a charming draught has life extended to me; much that was bitter has been changed into sweet, but yet *the best* wine has been preserved for me till the last."

"Lots in this world are thrown differently for man-

kind," said Flora, not without bitterness; "some seem made for misfortune, others again have, like you, sunshine from the cradle to the grave. And for these it must be easy to be good."

"You would perhaps think differently, if you knew me rightly," said the unknown, softly; "and a glance into my breast would allow you to judge whether I have always had a sun-brightened life, as you imagine—and yet you would only see an image of affliction which no human eye has seen, and which I myself have almost forgotten. The bitter waves have long ceased to roar, but they have left traces behind them." She opened the black dress, removed a white cloth, and showed us—a horrible sight! The bloody picture was soon again concealed.

"Pardon me!" said the unknown to Flora, who with a cry of horror had covered her eyes, "and now fear not! I feel that suffering comes. I shall not be able to keep back all complaint. But be not terrified; it will soon be over."

At that moment she seized convulsively a roll of papers, the whole body trembled, and the hue of death overspread her face, and with a dull cry of pain her head sunk upon her breast. This continued probably for ten minutes, then the hyæna of pain seemed to release the sufferer from his claws, but she evidently had not fully recovered her mind, and her soul seemed to wander in far regions, whilst her lips spoke broken words, like to those which Asaria sung in the fiery furnace.

By degrees the exalted expression passed from her countenance. A slumber, as it were, came over it. Then the unknown opened her eyes; they were clear and full of consciousness. She took up a little mirror which lay on the table and contemplated herself in it.

"It is over!" said she, as if to herself, and smiled with a thankful look towards heaven. Now for the first time she seemed to remember that she was not alone.

"It is now over," as she turned her again-enfeebled glance to Flora and me; "forgive me! Yet I know certainly that you do so. Compassionate me not! I am happy, unspeakably happy!"

I arose to end our visit.

"Permit me to come again," prayed Flora, with tearful eyes, as she took her leave.

"Willingly," replied the unknown, directed to us a dimmed but friendly look, and extended to us her hand affectionately.

We went.

"Who is she?" asked Flora, on the steps.

"She will be unknown," replied I; and we were both silent till we reached home.

As I went down to dinner I heard my young sister (who knew nothing of the forenoon's revolution in Flora) thus giving orders in the drawing-room:

"Trala, la, la! Jacob, do not forget, immediately after dinner, to go to the old coachman with this cake and bottle of wine. And in coming back do not forget to bring the rennets with you, of which my mother is so fond. And you, Ulla, remember at last that you have Miss Flora's dress ready this evening. You must be prodigiously industrious. La, lalali, la, la, la! And to-morrow you shall make yourselves merry. Then I shall let you go to the opera to see the 'May-day.' There you shall be merry to some purpose. Jacob shall be Ulla's and Karin's protector. Tralalili, lalali, la, la, la."

Thus went on for a while the harmonious commands, and gave me again a little proof that it is the endeavour of my Selma in the world to make every one around her happy. But *endeavour* is not the right word. When goodness approaches its consummation it has an inward harmony, an ennobled nature, whose movements are as involuntarily beautiful as the movements of Taglioni in the Sylphide. She makes the most difficult thing easy, and gives a charm to the meanest exterior of life.

Flora, during dinner, was thoughtful and gloomy. In the afternoon Lennartson came, and had a long conversation with her. He seemed earnestly and fervently to beseech something from her. She wept. At length I heard her say with vehemence:

"Not now, not now, Lennartson. Have patience with me still, for a little time, and I will tell you all; and then you will see that you are the only one in the world whom I love."

Lennartson now arose with a strong expression of discontent. He appeared impatient, and came into the other drawing-room, in which Selma and I sate. The sun shone through the crystal of the chandelier, and hundreds of little prismatic flames trembled on the walls, and on the pictures with which these were covered. Selma remarked the beauty of the colours, and the impression which their beauty made upon the mind.

"Yes!" said Lennartson aloud, as he fixed his eyes upon her, "light, purity is beautiful, as in colour so also in the human mind. I cannot comprehend how people love darkness, how people can be willing to linger in it; they must, in that case, have something to conceal, or——suspiciously dread the light."

Flora had approached, but remained standing at the door, on whose frame she leaned, while she held her hand pressed upon her breast, and riveted a glance of bitter pain on the speaker.

Selma saw this, and tears came into her lovely eyes. She said to Lennartson with animation and almost reproach:

"Clouds often conceal the sun from us, and yet it is still bright. If we could only raise ourselves above the clouds we should see it."

Lennartson looked at Selma with an inquiring glance, which by degrees melted away in mildness.

"Yes, you are right," said he slowly; "there may be faults in those who complain."

He went again to Flora, seized her hand, bent over it, and said some words to her which I did not hear, but whose effect I remarked in Flora's grateful look. Lennartson soon after this left us.

The 2nd of February.

Flora is calmer, and all quiet in the house. I begin to be satisfied with the polemical connexion between me and my stepmother. But shall we ever attain to the ideal of a noble contention, which the German professors, Feuerbach and Grollmann, have showed to the world? These two remarkable men were the warmest friends, and in the early part of their lives, were of the same way of thinking. Afterwards they separated in their scientific views, but without thereby allowing their personal esteem and friendship to be disturbed.

They invariably dedicated to each other their works, in which they invariably sought the one to convert the other. Thus they argued in love, and by the production of excellent works, to the end of their lives. Over such contentions must angels indeed rejoice.

5th February.

My acquaintance with the Viking begins to be somewhat stormy. But I console myself with the thought that "the storm belongs to God's weather,"* and may be governed by His spirit.

We were invited yesterday to a breakfast at the Chamberlain's. Without flattering myself, and without great self-love, I could very well understand the correctness of my stepmother's diplomatic hint, namely, that the breakfast was given on my account. The host did me *les honneurs* of his handsome house; his splendid furniture, his Athenienne, with a thousand little sumptuousnesses; his many arrangements, for convenience, and for the pleasant enjoyment of life; nay, I must even see his own expensive toilet. Whilst I thus wandered with him through his rooms, I in vain sought for a picture of actual value, or an object of higher interest; I found nothing of the kind, and I could not say much about the rest of the ornaments.

Wilhelm Brenner's eye was often watchfully directed upon me, whilst I was receiving so much of the host's attention. He on the contrary was taken up with a very pretty Mrs. Z.—the same with whom I had seen him at the gallery—a widow, and rich. "Z.," says a writing copy, "is in the Swedish language a superfluous letter;" and so methought was Mrs. Z. at this breakfast. By the abstracted looks of the Viking, I might have presumed that he thought so too; but for all that he remained near her, and amused himself by observing me from a distance. This rather vexed me; and thus for that reason I entertained myself more than common with the wit of my courteous uncle, said merry things myself, and contributed in my own way to entertain the company, for which I received much applause, especially from my stepmother. Towards two o'clock people separated, and went home. As the weather was fine, we walked. I saw

* Geijer.

Mrs. Z. go away on the arm of the Viking. The Chamberlain accompanied us, together with other gentlemen.

Scarcely were we come to the Castle Hill, when the Viking, under full sail from the side of the Bridge of Boats, joined himself to us. He was quite warm, and wiped his forehead. I had the Chamberlain on my left, Brenner took the right, and heard how I was making love—ridiculous! But what he had not heard was the occasion for my satirical sally, namely, the sighs and the little song of my uncle's love and the warmth of his heart! all which cooled me indescribably, because I knew the ground and the intention of it.

"I think," said I, "that never was so much said about love, and so little known about it as in our days. Those who talk publicly the loudest about Christian love, rend one another most bitterly; and as regards the love which men vow to women, the impulses to this are of very doubtful value. How many tender flames—those which are more smoke than flame—burst forth because one has ennui, because one wants to amuse oneself in some way? Is it not thus in glowing Italy; as you yourself have told me? Do not people form connexions there on purpose to drive away time? and merely continue them, because they have no spirit to undertake anything else? and so they drag lamentably through life with sighs and lemonade. Here, in our North, we seek really a little more substantial nourishment for love, seek the good things which open a prospect to comfortable life, dinners and good suppers, and so on. Yet the foundation is still no better, and love just as—needy."

"Have you then never met with, or seen 'REAL LOVE' in the world?" asked the Viking, with a tone of displeasure, and as it were of compassion for me.

"To be sure," continued I, in the same tone—"to be sure I have seen men feel actual love, nay, actually also become quite thin from it. I have heard them declare, when they met with hard hearts, that their life was gnawed by worms, and that people would soon have to weep over their death. Yes, I believe, too, that this at one time they themselves also believed; but this is certain, nevertheless, that in one or two years afterwards I have seen these men marry others than those for whose sake they would die, and that too, stout of body and full of joy. In one word, I have seen

enough of life and of the world, to have but little confidence in this so much spoken of, and in romances so much commended love, and to wish to have as little as possible to do with it. It is not worth one of the sighs which it costs."

"*Femme philosophe!*" exclaimed the Chamberlain. "You reason perfectly justly as regards this passion. I value the passions very little. Esteem, delicacy, mutual condescension, lay as good a foundation for a much more enduring happiness than——"

We were at this moment about to cross the North Bridge. Flora just then remembered that she wanted to buy something at Medberg's, my stepmother and Selma had the same thoughts; but I, who had no such views, and wished to get home, said that I would continue my way alone, and wait for the party at home. I earnestly declined the offers of my uncle to accompany me, and as the rest of the party took their way towards the Mynt-market, I pursued my way over the bridge.

But scarcely had I gone twenty paces when I saw the Viking at my side, and discovered, I know not how, that my arm rested in his. He hastened onwards with such prodigious strides, that I had trouble to keep up with him.

He turned round at a right angle, just where the bridge extends itself to the right, and remained standing in that corner where the river rages below, and the poplars of the river-parterre ascend upwards to the granite balustrades of the bridge. Then he dropped my arm, and turning towards me with a confidential air, said with a warm but suppressed voice:

"Tell me! Is all that which you have just now said, this cursed gallemathias of love, your really earnest thought?"

"My really earnest thought," repeated I.

"That I will not believe," continued he warmly, "or I pity you from my whole heart! Good heavens! how can you thus despise the highest and holiest in life! When I hear such talk it makes me indignant. How can people be so contracted, nay, I must say, so stupid; and see things in such an oblique, such a false, such a fundamentally false light! It makes me angry to hear a woman, created to love and to be loved, so mistake herself, and allow herself to be so bewildered by the little poverties of life, that she can ex-

change them for that of which thought has no idea, and the tongue no word, and which exists as certainly upon the earth as it exists in heaven, and which is the only feeling by which we can comprehend the life of heaven; the only feeling which gives value to life. People talk about science and philosophy as instructors of the heart and of life! That is altogether nonsense, say I, compared with the ennobling of a noble love!"

"This is an especially well-chosen place for a *tête-à-tête*, and to preach a sermon on love!" thought I, smiling in my own mind, as I observed the vehement mien of the Viking, and the mass of walking and driving people who were in motion around us, and of whom the Viking, in his angry mood, seemed to take no notice. I was also somewhat confounded by his behaviour towards me, but I looked at the raging waters below me, and at the raging spirit before me, and I know not what fresh breath of air passed over my soul. I was silent, and Brenner continued as before:

"And this miserable glass-cupboard reason! It makes people, from fear of life, shut themselves in a birdcage; from fear of fresh air, steam themselves to death in the heat of stoves; and from fear of strong feelings and great sufferings, waste their souls and their time in mere trifles. Tell me, how can you endure such reason? It is just as false as it is miserable. It is good for nothing, say I!" And the Viking struck with his clenched fist so violently upon the balustrade, that it would have trembled if it had not been of stone.

As I still stood there like Lot's wife, changed by a shower of fire into a pillar of salt, and seized upon by a strange feeling, he continued with increasing violence: "Tell me!—I will know, what, or who is it that has let you get hold of such a mistrusting of life, of mankind; nay, even of our Lord himself. If it be your blessed philosophy, then—throw it into the river!"

Brenner, by the violent action which he was here making with his arms, struck my reticule, which rested on the balustrade; it fell into the river, and was borne by its waves rapidly forward into the sea.

This catastrophe, and the sight of the Viking's astonishment, dissolved at once my immovable state into a hearty laugh, and as Brenner seemed ready to take the speediest measures for saving the reticule, I held him back, and said:

"Do not trouble yourself about it. There are only a few rennets to suffer shipwreck in it. I care nothing about it. Only let your angry temper go with it to the sea, for in truth you do me injustice."

"Do I do you an injustice—thank God for it!" said Brenner, with a look which deeply affected me, and I continued:

"Yes, because, although that which I said just now, and which has made you so angry, is actually my serious opinion, yet I have my reservation as to the object. I distinguish between Amor and Eros, but I have seen more of the first than of the last in life, and I spoke properly of that."

"But you believe in the other?"

"That I do. That I will say; I believe in general in the truth and depth of the feelings of which you speak; but in individual cases I am, in consequence of certain experience, always mistrustful. In the mean time, I thank you cordially for the proof of friendship which you have given to me. Ah! let me think about love as I will; I believe in friendship, and I feel that we are friends."

And herewith I took his arm, and began to proceed homewards. The Viking said:

"Love, friendship! should these be thus separated? And how can anybody doubt the one who believes in the other?"

It did not please me to answer this question, and our conversation was here interrupted by being overtaken by our party who had been left behind. They looked somewhat amazed, and said various things of our "speedy return home." The Viking declared:

"Miss Sophia lost her bag or reticule in the river."

But how it was lost, he said not; and they began to propose means for recovering it, and the Viking, again in cheerful humour, made various break-neck and impossible proposals.

The 3rd.

A far handsomer reticule, encircled with a bouquet of roses and myrtle, was sent to me from him in the name of the lost one, which, as he said, had been fished out of the river in this form. The "river spirit" wished in these flowers to speak to you of his love, said the Viking, and he wondered what kind of an answer he would receive.

I said, "Merely great thanks!"

"And if he be not satisfied with that?" asked Brenner.

"Then, his flowers should be—sent back to him," said I, half jesting and half seriously.

"You would not throw them into the river?" said the Viking, quite gravely; "you are then not afraid of wounding, of doing wrong? You can be stern, *unsparing*."

"You forget," said I, interrupting him, "that the 'river spirit' and his feelings are fictions, and I am no longer of the age in which one believes in such things; neither can I see, dearest Brenner, why a pretty little joke should be taken so seriously, which in itself is very polite, and for which I thank you sincerely."

The Viking was silent, but looked dissatisfied; I begin to fear that the man has a very bad temper.

The 7th.

And a great many faults has he found in me to-day; he has reproached me for my self-will, or, as he called it, my "Finnish temper." I told him that this was precisely my best quality, and as he shook his head, I related to him that I was descended from a race of the Wasastjernar, who had given to the world the most beautiful example of the Finnish national character. Thus, namely, when the Russians, in the year 1809, conquered Finland, there lived in the city of Wasa, two brothers, one the judge of the court of justice, the other a merchant, who, when the residents of the city were compelled to swear an oath of fidelity to the Emperor of the Russias, alone and steadfastly refused it.

"We have sworn an oath of fidelity to the King of Sweden, and unless he himself released us from it, we cannot swear obedience to another monarch," remained their constant answer to all persuasions, as well friendly as hostile. Provoked by this obstinacy, and fearing the example which would be given by it, the Russians threw the stiff-necked brothers into prison and threatened them with death. Their answer remained always the same, to the increasing severity and multiplied threats of the Russians. At length the sentence of death was announced to them. On a fixed day, they were to be conducted out to the Gallows-hill, and there to be executed as criminals, in case their obstinacy did not yield and they took the required oath. The brothers were

immovable. 'Rather,' replied the judge, in the name of both, 'will we die, than become perjured.'

"At this answer, a powerful hand struck the speaker on the shoulder. It was the Cossack who kept watch over the brothers, and now exclaimed with a kindling glance, 'Dobra kamerad!' ('Bravo comrade!')

"The Russian authorities spoke otherwise, and on the appointed day the brothers were carried out to the place of execution. They were sentenced to be hanged; but yet once more at this last hour, and for the last time, pardon was offered them if they would but consent to that which was required from them.

"'No!' replied they, 'hang, hang! We are brought hither not for speech-making, but to be hanged.'

"This steadfastness softened the hearts of the Russians. Admiration took the place of severity, and they rewarded the fidelity and courage of the brothers with magnanimity. They presented them not merely with life, but sent them free and safely over to Sweden, to the people and to the king to whom they had been true to the death. The King of Sweden elevated them to the rank of nobles, and after this they lived greatly esteemed in the capital of Sweden to a great age."

This relation gave pleasure to Brenner. He promised with a beaming and tearful eye no more to reproach me with my "Finnish temper."

The 9th.

Something astonishing on the side of my stepmother and on my side, but not in the way in which my stepmother expected. For it really was no surprise to me that my stepmother conducted me with a mysterious air into her boudoir, and announced herself as "*Envoyé extraordinaire*," as "*ministre plenipotentiaire*," on the side of my uncle the Chamberlain, in order to treat with me of an alliance between him and me. But it was unexpected by me, that my stepmother said not a word to persuade me to such a marriage. On the contrary, she said sundry beautiful, and to me, particularly agreeable things, on the danger of bringing-about or persuading to such things. She wished merely my happiness; I myself must choose that which would lead to it. On one side, I certainly might feel myself happy with a husband like the Chamberlain, and in the "*état*" in which

a marriage with him would place me ; but on the other side, it also was certain, that as an unmarried person I might also find myself very well off. Her house should always be mine, and she would be happy to see me there, and so on.—“She had not now undertaken to woo for the Chamberlain, but merely to hear whether he might announce himself as a hopeful lover.”

This circumspection of hers pleased me much, because I can thus ward off his attentions, and need not say a word to him, which is contrary to my nature, that little vexatious word, “No !”

In the mean time he has been good to me, has showed me kindness and confidence—it grieves me not to be able to do to him a pleasure—nay, perhaps, be compelled to distress him. How poor is man here upon the earth ! I feel myself quite melancholy and humble.

The 10th.

And thou, honest Wilhelm Brenner, shalt not hear from me that word of refusal. I understand now thy intentions well ; but thou shalt not speak out that aloud which I cannot answer according to thy wishes ; shalt not stretch forth thy true hand to see it rejected.—I value thee too highly for that ; I think too much of thee for that. I like Brenner greatly ; but not so much as I love my own independence, the peace of my soul, and the prospect of a peaceful and care-free future. I will be his friend, but no more. I dread marriage ; I dread that compulsion, that dark deep suffering, which the power of one being over another so often exhibits. I have seen so much of it.

I know well, that in consequence of wise laws of our evangelical church, marriage is not an indissoluble bond, but that a divorce can be obtained on various grounds ; wherefore the polemic, which from certain quarters one hears against wedlock and conjugal life, has reached the highest degree of uselessness and absurdity conceivable. For what pure and thinking being enters into marriage without seriously regarding it, as our marriage formula so beautifully expresses—acknowledging in this act a public declaration of God’s thought, and which therefore ought to be regarded as law and rule on earth ? If He who only once or twice spoke to the children of earth, and then left them to unfold the

meaning of his words—if even He had not by his words strengthened the principle of marriage, which, pure in the early times of the world, had its origin in the incorrupted sense of the human race, yet would human prudence alone lead to the establishment of some law and regulation for marriage, with its glance directed to the children, which are its fruit. The marriage which calls forth in the wedded pair the knowledge of the meaning and object of their union, elevates them thereby to a point of moral greatness, from which the accidental provocations that arise in marriage are easily conquered. And certainly this union would make more people infinitely happy if they allowed themselves to be rightly consecrated by marriage, in its high and holy spirit. Yes, if mankind once rose so high in moral greatness, that marriage might be released from all legal bonds, they would, precisely, by reason of this moral greatness—maintain the marriage.

I know also that very often is the woman the cause of unhappiness in marriage. I know that many a wife is for her husband, as it were, a cause of living irritation; and for the terror and warning of all bad wives, I will write down here what occurred lately in my neighbourhood.

A young, honest, and industrious man, who, with a wife and three children, made a good income by his industry, took arsenic a few days ago. Whilst under the most terrible effect of this, his wife would insist upon his drinking sweet milk. But he thrust her from him, saying:

“Let me die in peace! You have gnawed at me for these years like rust upon iron; I can live no longer.”

But the wife in his last hours let him have no peace, but heaped upon him reproaches, and demanded: “Do you not know that you have committed a great sin against me and my poor children?”

“You would have it so,” replied he, coldly, and died. Listen to this, my good women!

No less, my good gentlemen, is it certain that the suffering which I have seen in marriage has proceeded especially from you, and for that reason I will take no lord and master, and will not become a wife.

And shall I on that account be less useful to society? Folly, and the belief of fools! Friend, relation, citizen—

noble names and occupations. Oh, who is able fully to act up to them !

The 11th.

Again is a sledging party talked of, and the promoters of it are Lennartson and Brenner. Lennartson will drive Flora. I suspect that he takes this opportunity of giving her pleasure and having conversation with her undisturbed. He is evidently observant of her mood of mind, and this has been for several days in the highest degree disturbed.

The Viking has invited me to his sledge, and I have consented, on the condition of his eldest sweet little daughter Rosine going with us. To that he has agreed, but only compelled by necessity. I will not take so long a drive *tête-à-tête* with the Viking, but I will carefully make use of the first opportunity to turn aside his schemes of conquest, and to tell him of my determination of remaining independent, of letting friendship, and not love, be the pulse in the life of my heart.

Selma has declared merrily that nobody shall drive her, but that she herself will go with her mother in their new covered sledge, and will be drawn by their beautiful "Isabella." And that thus it shall remain.

There will be a train of some fifty sledges. Selma and Flora rejoice in it—like young girls. The gentlemen equip their sledges with the beautiful skins of wild beasts. We have talked already for a week of nothing else. May the weather only remain favourable.

Yet is it a purely northern enjoyment, which a purely northern life has—such a pleasure-excursion as this in the clear winter air, under the bright blue heaven, upon the snow-white earth ! They fly away so gaily and lightly—the open ones covered with skins and with white nets fluttering over fiery, foaming horses, they fly along so fleetly to the play of the jingling bells. And it feels so irresistibly pleasant thus to drive away over the earth in a train of joyous people, and by the side of a friend who participates in every feeling, every impression.

All this I felt yesterday, and yet I now retain a troubled impression of our party of pleasure. Thus is it with all the pleasure of the world.

Still it was magnificent in the beginning. Our drive

resembled a triumphal procession as we proceeded through the principal streets of the city, and were seen and admired by a vast number of people, as well without as within their houses. After this, when we advanced from the city-gate into the country, how white shone the snow-fields—how beautiful was the snow through the pine and fir-woods—how we flew like magic over land and lake, whilst the craggy, woody shores fled past us! I was glad and enchanted, and Brenner enjoyed my delight, and that sweet girl between us increased it by her child-like joy.

After a tolerably long drive we stopped at an inn at the Park Well, where we were to dine. Dinner was ready to be served as we arrived, and was quite splendid and cheerful, and without that offensive ostentation and superfluity which ought to be banished from the society of thinking people. Our hosts, Lennartson and Brenner, were the life and joy of the dinner. Songs also were sung, in which the voice of the Viking produced a great effect. When we have advanced a little in our friendship, I will counsel him to moderate his voice a little.

After dinner Lennartson asked me to play a *nigar-polska*, and this immediately set the whole company in lively motion with its grotesque, but merry flourishings and jokes. Even Aunt Pendelfelt got upon her legs and flourished about with the rest. Selma and Flora signalled themselves by their grace, although in different ways. At length people must begin to think of their return, and cool themselves before they set off.

A part of the company was already leaving, when Brenner called my attention to two portraits which hung in the room; the one represented the great Queen Elizabeth of England, the other the noble Princess Elizabeth of Thuringia.

“Which of these would you be?” asked Brenner.

In jesting tone I asked back again, “Have you not heard speak of a person, who when asked whether he would have warm or cold milk, answered, ‘Might I ask for a little ale-posset?’ I must now answer you somewhat in the same way, since I am right joyful that I am not obliged to be one of these Elizabeths, and choose rather to be that which ‘I am,’ though somewhat less.”

Brenner smiled and said: “But if you must choose between these two—could you be undecided? How beautiful is

that affectionate, self-sacrificing wife, beside the cold, wordly-prudent Egotist?"

"Granted!" I replied; "but the question always is what a woman loves, and for whom she sacrifices herself. Thus, for example, it always seems to me, that the exclusive love of one human being would be too mean an object for a human life, for the citizen of a divine kingdom. And I fancy that he who sinks himself in so contracted an existence in one individual, gives up the noblest in life."

"Ah! how contracted—and how incomprehensibly vexatious is that remark!" exclaimed the Viking.

"Not so contracted as you think," said I, somewhat proudly, "after that which I have seen of life. And then, have I not seen many a young girl, with a rich soul, with a mind open to all that is good and beautiful in humanity, and full of will to work for it; have I not seen how this same girl, some years after her marriage, is shrunk together into a narrow circle of cares and joys—the sense for the general and the whole lost for ever, and more and more compressed into the petty sphere of self, till she at last had lost sight of her higher goal, and scarcely could lift her eyes above the sill of her own house."

"But my best, gracious Miss Sophia," exclaimed the Viking, "that is an entirely mistaken, an entirely insane view of the question, an entirely absurd idea. Why should people for their own sakes overlook the true and the real? If a young girl gives herself away, or if she is given away to a dolt or a block of wood, or to any other beast, then indeed she must take the road as she finds it; and I have nothing to do with it, neither has love, in its true sense. Because true love is that which, while it unites two beings with each other, unites them only the more closely with social life and with humanity; the true marriages consecrate people for a higher and a richer world; the true home is that where the fear of God rules like an invincible spirit, and all members of it, each one according to his strength and according to his gifts, is made useful for the great home of the world. This is clear as sunlight! I cannot comprehend how people see these things in an oblique point of view, and argue against them accordingly. That, methinks, is really contracted; and pardon me if I say, A LITTLE STUPID!"

"I forgive," replied I, smiling, "because I begin to be

accustomed to your calling me stupid ; and your description of these connexions in their beauty affects me, but such are seldom found on earth, and I have not seen them upon my path. On the contrary, I have seen and heard so much that is bitter in domestic life, which knits itself up with marriage, that I am become afraid of it, and for my part have determined not to let myself be bound by it, but to live independently, certain of this, that I in this manner can best accomplish my human mission."

"That you will not," said Brenner, very decidedly. "You mistake yourself. As yet you are young, and full of life ; as yet the world meets you ; as yet you are surrounded by pleasures ; but a time will come in which the world will be benumbed towards you, in which you yourself will be benumbed, be frozen for want of warm hearts, of true 'bands which will knit you to earthly life.'"

"Through the power of God, I hope neither to petrify nor to freeze," replied I, smiling. "The human soul also has its sun, which beams high above all earthly suns ; and besides this—why should I feel the want of warm hearts as long as my own heart is warm ? And that does not feel as if it would grow cold, even if all the snow in the world were piled upon it."

In the mean time we were come down to the ground-floor, where a mass of people were putting on their furs. The light of the full moon shone over the landscape, which, from the height where we stood, spread itself out in winterly pomp. But all was snow-covered and stiff. The trees shone with crystals of ice in the cold moonlight. The cold was severe. An involuntary shudder passed through me. The Viking had taken my fur cloak from the servant, and warmed it on his heart.

"The snow of life," said he, softly and inwardly. "Oh, how you should preserve yourself from it !" He wrapped the cloak around, but it was not this which made me conscious of a soft embrace, warm as a summer wind.

We were soon seated in the sledge, but the company had separated themselves, and drove in little parties back to the city. Lennartson and Brenner remained together, and then came my stepmother in the covered sledge, with Selma and Mrs. Rittersvärd. We were the last of the party, because

the hosts considered it as their duty to watch over the departure of all the guests. As we had been warned that the ice was not very strong, every one had agreed that during the drive over the lake they were to keep at a distance of from twenty to thirty paces from each other.

The moonlight was beautiful, and beautiful its lighting up of the white ice-fields of the dark shore. Far off in the background we saw the lights of Stockholm glimmer. The drive was romantic, but its effect was lost on me. The little Rosine soon fell asleep with her head resting on my bosom, and the Viking made use of the opportunity to lead the conversation in the direction which I feared, therefore I evaded it with a few short and cold answers. He was vexed, and said provoking things to me, to which I was silent. At length he too was silent. We were both of us out of tune, and with a melancholy feeling I contemplated the passing shore, the clouded heaven, and the dark fir-branches, which here and there protruded from the ice to show the open places, and which, in the increasing dusk, resembled horribly fantastic shapes of animals and men. Some words spoken by Brenner had wounded my heart. The gloomy impression of the moment made me feel this deeper—I could not help weeping, but quite silently. I know not whether he conjectured what was passing within me, but after a while he said with a gentle voice:

“Have I been disagreeable again? Forgive me! Do not be angry with me, good, sweet Miss Sophia!” and he laid his hand gently upon mine. I pressed it without replying, for I could not then speak. Further communication was prevented by a dull cry for help, which forced itself on our ears, and in which we could distinguish the voice of a child, which complained lamentably. Brenner pulled up his sledge.

“Perhaps somebody who has driven into a hole in the ice,” said he. “I must see what it is. Might I take you and Rosine to your stepmother’s sledge? As soon as possible I will return.”

“We will leave the little girl there,” said I; “but why should I now part from you, when I probably in some way or other may be helpful to you. No! I go with you.”

The Viking made no answer; we looked about for the

sledge of my stepmother, and a feeling of anguish took hold of me as we could not discover it.

At that same moment two sledges came driving furiously over the ice, from the point where the cry was heard. In the first sate two boisterous and noisy gentlemen, whose voices, as well as their mode of driving, made it evident that they were in no sober state. They drove so furiously upon our horse, that if Brenner had not suddenly checked it, probably some misfortune might have happened. A dark cloud concealed the moon, and the deep twilight prevented us from distinguishing the countenances of the noisy gentlemen, but I thought that I recognised the Rutschenfelts in the voice. The other sledge paused a moment, and a voice, which I knew for that of Felix Delphin, said :

“Hold ! hold ! Really I believe that we have driven over the boy behind us there.”

“Ah, a pretty joke !” replied the other, who I would wager was St. Orme ; “he only got a little blow, that I will swear. Let the cursed youngster howl, if it amuse him. Let go the reins ! else we shall come too late, and the others will get the best of the supper. See there, now he is still ! Let us go !”

And the sledges rushing at the most rapid speed, passed us towards Stockholm.—(N.B. The gentlemen whom I thought I now recognised, had declined to be of our sledging party on the pretence that they were invited out for the day.)

As we were turning in the direction whence the cry, although weaker, was still heard, we saw that Lennartson also had driven thither, and heard Flora exclaim with anxiety :

“Certainly the ice at the edge is brittle, and we shall all go down together.”

Lennartson gave the reins to the servant, and whilst he threw himself out of the sledge, called to us to stop and take him with us. We stopped, he sprang upon the sledge beam, and we drove rapidly forward.

We were now on the spot where feeble tones of lamentation made themselves still heard, and the moon shone over a singular group. A young lady in the most elegant winter dress, with light red feathers, which waved in a white silk bonnet, stood, bending over a boy clothed in rags, whom a servant in livery had raised up ; an old man of tall stature,

with a staff in his hand, stood near, and stared up towards heaven with blind eyes.

The young lady was Selma, who having heard the cry for help earlier than we, and who seeing the other sledges continue their drive, had prevailed on her mother to turn towards this side, in order to see if they could help. My step-mother remained with her sledge immediately on the place.

The old man related how two sledges had driven so rapidly, that he and the boy had not time to avoid them. The first sledge had knocked the boy down, and the second driven over him, and notwithstanding their cries, had continued on their way. The old man appeared not to have suffered at all, but the boy was severely hurt; and after Lennartson had in the best manner bound him with our pocket handkerchiefs, he carried him to the sledge of my stepmother, where he was left under the care of Selma. Our servant was ordered to accompany the blind man to his dwelling in the Park, but he was unwilling to separate from the boy, who was his only comfort and his only support since the death of his children, the parents of the boy; and he was for that reason seated with the coachman, and went with us.

We turned now again upon our homeward way, and met Flora, who was slowly driving towards us. Lennartson took his seat again beside her; but I fancy that the return was not very agreeable to either of them.

On arriving at home Lennartson instantly fetched a physician to the boy, and this morning he is taken into the hospital. He is fortunately not dangerously hurt, and will in a month's time be again restored. In the mean time he is Selma's and my child. Lennartson and Brenner have adopted the old man, whose disease of the eyes is of that kind which admits of an operation, and he may regain his sight.

Flora pouts and looks askew on all this affair, and on the common interest which has sprung up between Lennartson and Selma through their protégé, whilst the dissimilar behaviour of the two young girls on this occasion seems to have made a strong impression on Lennartson.

The 17th.

I have endeavoured to examine Felix on the ice-drive and its adventure. He pretends to be ignorant and hurt in the highest degree, but a certain painful confusion in his manner

convinces me that I have not suspected him and the others in an unjust manner. I have heard from Åke Sparrsköld that St. Orme often misleads young men to drink, and then to gamble, and thus wins from them their money; and that he had invited Felix and his friends to an orgie of the lowest kind on the day of the sledging party. I now spoke seriously and warmly, nay, almost sisterly, to Felix, and warned him of this false and dangerous friend. I reminded him of his promise to Selma, and on that which depended upon it. He answered not a word, but looked unhappy, and left us quickly. I fear, I fear that he is pursuing a dangerous course. His more regular life for some time after his conversation with Selma seems not to have lasted long, and he is so weak that the Rutschenfelts "Do not be beguardianed, Felix! Be a man!" or their jest that "He is already under petticoat government," are sufficient to lead him into every possible folly. I have had an impulse to talk myself with St. Orme, and to call forth the good spirit in him; but think! if the wicked one show his teeth to me! In the mean time I will let these thoughts concoct yet a while; over-hasty words seldom fall in good ground.

The 20th.

Our children, the seven-years-old and sixty-years-old, go on hopefully and joyfully. The aged man is operated upon, and it has succeeded excellently. Lennartson was here to-day, and related to us, in his lively way, the particulars of the affair.

The joy of the old man that he could again see the sun and his child; that he again could work, and lay aside the beggar's staff, affected us all. We took into consideration the future of our children, and adopted unanimously Lennartson's plans.

Selma has found means to draw Flora into this affair, so that she now, like the others, takes part in it, and appears warmly to interest herself in it, namely—in Lennartson's presence.

The 23rd.

The Baron has received additional honours in titles and stars. As he came to us this evening decorated with the latter, Flora exhibited great joy on that account, whilst

Selma and I wished him joy in all simplicity. Lennartson received Flora's exaggerated tokens of joy with coldness, and was, for the rest, not quite in good humour. My stepmother noticed this, and said jestingly :

"It seems as if Lennartson quarrels with his good fortune precisely when it adorns him most handsomely."

"Good fortune!" said Lennartson, smiling sorrowfully.

"Yes," replied my stepmother; "at least, what most people would regard as such."

"Ah!" said Lennartson, whilst he seated himself beside her with a kind of filial confidence, "it is exactly that which vexes me, that people often regard such things as good fortune, and set value upon them, without asking whether they be a sign of merit; whether they have any real meaning;—it makes me angry that it should be so, and that I myself am childish enough not to be rightly free from this weakness. It quite torments me. But the superficiality of life is so infectious. Therefore I long to release myself from it."

"But in all the world not to quit the service on that account?" said my stepmother, terrified.

"No!" replied Lennartson, "that is quite another thing. I will only be released that I thereby—may come deeper into life. I know well when I could be indifferent to all this outward glitter, and warm and rich from the reward which no human eye sees, from a look, a quiet approval."

"And where is this Eldorado?" asked my stepmother, affected, and at the same time suspicious.

With a voice, which was at the same time softened and rendered more full by deep feeling, Lennartson said :

"I had it once in the heart of my mother; I would meet with it in the heart—of my wife; if," continued he, with emphasis, "if she understood me, if she were such as my soul desires, and my heart seeks after. Many a one congratulates me on my happiness in having made my own way in life, and I—consider myself not to have been happy, that I have not yet properly lived—at least, since my earliest youth," added he, mournfully.

All this was said half aloud to my stepmother, who was evidently affected, and spoke kindly words regarding the future, though it might not be in a cheerful tone.

I looked at the young girls: Flora blushed deeply; that

Selma grew pale, I could merely suppose ; because at my glance she rose and left the room.

Here have I then become acquainted with one of the Lennartson faults of which the Viking spoke. But the way in which he discovered it has made the man only more interesting in my eyes.

The 1st of March.

Brenner will not understand me, will not attend to my hints. He seems as if he would give his heart free play in making an attack on my heart. Well, then ! May his, during the combat, only not be wounded. I will not lose a friend in the lover, and a friend so noble and so dear to me as Wilhelm Brenner. I never was happy in love. Where I loved I have not been again beloved, and where I have been beloved with true affection I could not return the same feeling. But I have to thank friendship, pure-minded friendship, for my highest delights on the earth. A rejected lover may easily become the truest friend, and that he is not so is often the fault of the beloved woman.

In this case it will not be my fault, that I feel in myself. I know nothing more sorrowful than when an acquaintance, which begins in cordiality, extinguishes itself in bitterness ; or where warm feelings change themselves into cold ones. Every seed of tenderness which the All-good has sown upon the earth, should unfold itself into a plant and flower ; should here sprout up at His footstool, to blossom sometime yet more gloriously before His throne. If it be otherwise ; if the flower die in its bud, then is it the fault of man, and a very sorrowful thing. I write this in the odour of the lilacs which I have received from my friend, and with a heart that is warm towards him. It is calm and light within me.

Thou that allay'st the restless heart's commotion,
 Illuminator of life's midnight hour !
 To whom was given the ancient world's devotion,
 And even now art our most glorious dower ;
 Thou who wast by, when Chaos was up-broken ;
 Who played'st in joy in the Creator's sight ;
 Thou who wast by when *primal words* were spoken,
 And heights and depths gave Being forth to light.
 Life's morn and evening star, O Wisdom ! brightly,
 When I in darkness lay, thy light was shown ;
 Since then 'tis well with me, my heart beats lightly,
 Burning with love ; but love for Thee alone !

The 2nd.

The miserable, misfortune-bringing, poisonous and poisoned Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce! I would that they sat turned to stone up aloft on the hill of difficulty, and could move neither foot nor tongue! I would they had been fettered yesterday. Then should I not have been obliged to go thither to-day with the heaviest burden which life has, and to come back without any alleviation; then had I not been obliged to sit here as now, and to write with a sort of desperation, whilst tears fall upon my paper rather than the words which I throw upon it, almost without seeing them.

But now came those birds of misfortune yesterday afternoon, and darted down by my stepmother. I was sitting with her at my painting, and I was amused in listening to the round which these three ladies made among our near and distant acquaintances. Already had they gone through a long list of "They believe, they say, they assert," when Mrs. P. vehemently exclaimed, "Now for a bit of news which is sure and certain! What think you of our honest Colonel Brenner having last week received 'a basket' from the rich widow, Mrs. Z. ? That I know from your own sister-in-law, who related the whole affair to me. She herself, as regarded him, was not disinclined, but the five step-children would have terrified her."

"Yes, the poor man!" said Miss P., "he will not find it easy to get a wife with that crowd of children; at least not a wife who has money."

"Need Colonel Brenner then, in the choice of a wife, make money so much an object?" asked I, in no enviable state of mind.

"A man always must do that who has five children to care for, and who has no other property than his profession," replied Mrs. P. "Brenner's wife had nothing; and he himself, although a man of rank, has been no good husbänder of his income."

"Is Mrs. Z. an estimable person?" asked I again; and Miss P. made answer:

"Oh, the person is well-behaved enough, I fancy; but she has neither head nor heart; but with a fine complexion, a handsome figure, and large landed property,* one needs

* Guldåsa säteri, an estate which, according to the Swedish laws, can only be held by a noble.

neither head nor heart to enchant. A little vain, a little mad about getting married, is she to be sure—it is an unfortunate passion that, of wishing to get married! I say with Madame de Sevigné, I would rather get drunk!”

“I also,” said I; “but is it known for certain that Colonel Brenner paid his addresses to Mrs. Z. last week?”

“Quite certainly is it known, my sweetest of friends! Her own sister-in-law told me of it. Besides this, there are documents in the affair; for it was negotiated by letters, which certainly must have been very affecting, for Mrs. Z. has cried days and nights over them—there must singly and solely on that account have been a wash of pocket-handkerchiefs. But she has her own friends, and will console herself, and think about a certain gentleman without children, and—*à propos*, people say also in the world that Colonel Brenner too will endeavour to console himself, and will seek for his consolation in this house; people assert even that Miss Sophia Adelan knows something more of the affair.”

Reddening like a guilty person, and proud as an innocent one, I repelled the charge, and declared myself wholly unacquainted with it. And, as the sisters persisted in jesting with me, my stepmother said, with a graceful dignity which pleased me infinitely:

“As Colonel Brenner has so lately paid his addresses to Mrs. Z., it would very little accord with the esteem which he cherishes for Sophia, and with his own character, if he should so quickly solicit her hand. Besides, I fancy that this match would very little suit Sophia. It is no joke with so many stepchildren. If my Sophia wishes to be married, she will not lack opportunities of choosing among—um, um, um!”

“Oh, of course! That is certain! When a person has so many charms and talents, and so much property, there lacks nothing; and people talk already of a certain Baron and Chamberlain—perhaps one may already offer congratulations.”

I scarcely was able to give a token of disavowal, and was glad that a servant came to say that the carriage was at the door, in which the Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce took leave, and my stepmother and Flora drove out to pay visits.

“Let nobody come in! say that nobody is at home!” said I to the Philosopher (the old trusty servant of the house, whose business it is to watch through the whole day, half

sleeping in the hall), and I threw myself in the arm-chair, before the piano, in the drawing-room. One single light burnt in the chandelier with a long wick. It was twilight in the room, it was twilight in my own soul.

"It is the property! It is a speculation!" thought I. My mind was in so painful a state that I wept. The image of the Viking was dimmed in my inmost soul. I saw him before, so pure, so noble, so far from all worldly modes of action, and now! But no! I will not give way to the thoughts which the news I have heard awakens in me. "Still! still!" said I to the tormenting spirits, "leave me my faith in him, and let me retain my friend. Besides, why should I believe that he will woo me. He will not. He seeks in me merely a confidant, a friend, a sister!" And I let all the five little children come up before me in order to explain his courtship of Mrs Z.

The "*Sonate pathétique*" of Beethoven lay upon the music desk, and I began to play it. This wild *agitato* removed the tumult from my soul, and hushed it; it elevated itself on the streams of sound, and burst with them through all thwarting hindrances to the earnest, lovely, all-releasing, all-reconciling unveiling, to the glorious closing notes. So deeply was I absorbed by my music that I did not hear a conversation which was taking place in the hall, and which ended in the Philosopher opening the door and saying in a voice which resembled that of the ghost in Hamlet:

"Miss Adelan, Captain Brenner is in the hall, and will resolutely come in. Shall I beg him to go away?"

"Did I not say that nobody was to be admitted?" asked I.

"Yes, he said that," said a well-known voice. "But I told him that I am already admitted!" And Brenner at one spring stood before me, with outstretched hand, so kind, so joyous, so cordial, that I nearly forgot all the impressions with which I had just then combated, and my heart moved itself towards him.

He gave me a bouquet of beautiful flowers, as he continued, "Only do not say to me that I must go away!"

Kindly, but sorrowfully, I said, "Ah, no! Stay here now. My mother will soon be home."

"Oh, that is not of much consequence to me," said he. "I would now rather talk alone with you."

My heart beat from secret anxiety. He looked at me,

and my appearance must have indicated fully my state of mind, for he was suddenly uneasy, and asked tenderly and with his whole heart, whether I were ill.

"No, I am very well." Whether I was vexed? "Yes, I must confess that; I had heard something which had discomposed me." Whether he might not share it, whether he might not endeavour to be my comforter? I was silent. Should I tell him all? thought I. Yet no! That were indeed a folly. He would fancy that I was in love with him. He renewed his questions with more and more warmth. "No!" replied I, at length; "not now—perhaps at some future time"—Whether I were vexed with him? "Yes—No—He must not ask any more."

"Not ask any more?" exclaimed Brenner. He was silent for a while, and began then again, with a gentle, tremulous voice: "And yet I came now, on purpose, to ask you a serious question, a very important question—a question which has often thrust itself to my lips, and which I can no longer keep back—a question, upon which depends the weal or woe of my life. I came on purpose to ask—Sophia, will you, can you love me? I have long loved you unspeakably! Will you accompany me through life, in pleasure and pain?"

The voice, the look, the expression, even the pressure of his hand, which had seized mine—Oh, what eloquence of the heart! And all this he had consecrated the week before to Mrs. Z. And Mrs. Z., without head and heart, with a fine complexion and landed property, ascended like a ghost between Brenner and me, and caused me indescribable anguish.

Oh, if he had but been to me that which he had been only a few hours before, how candidly and how warmly should I have talked to him; how could I have refused his hand without wounding his heart; how could I have removed the lover, and yet have retained him for ever a friend.

But in the darkness which had now risen in my soul, I recognised neither him nor myself; the whole world was changed. A crippling coldness, a petrifying stupor overcame my whole being; I felt myself turned into a marble image, and therefore I let Brenner talk without understanding him; heard him speak of his children, "children which it was a delight and honour to have;" heard him say how he

and his children would make me happy by love and gratitude ; saw him bend his knee before me, conjuring me to listen to him and answer him. But I could not answer, could move neither hand nor tongue ; my eyes were still and staringly riveted upon him ; yet I felt as if my eyes were filling by degrees with tears. Then he reproached me jestingly with keeping him so long before me on his knees ; and with a sudden turn he seated himself at my feet, embraced my knees, and declared that he would not rise till I had given to him my "Yes."

This manœuvre had almost entirely overcome me. I was just about to lean myself towards his beloved head, and open my whole heart to him ; but at that same moment I heard a bustle in the hall, and the voices of many persons who had entered.

In that same moment I awoke to a full consciousness, and to the whole bitterness of my position.

"Stand up ! In God's name, stand up !" said I to Brenner. "Some one comes !"

"The whole world may come !" replied he, with defiance and affection ; "I shall not stand up without an answer from you."

A thought of hell arose in my mind ; he will surprise thee, he will compel thee, he will remain here at thy feet to make it impossible for thee to refuse his hand !

With proud resentment in look and voice I sprang up, and said :

"Captain Brenner ! I have done wrong to leave you so long in uncertainty. Pardon me, and hear now my last answer. My hand and my property I will preserve independent. I esteem no man high enough to give him right and rule over them."

Brenner on his part had risen up—and at my stern reply fixed upon me a look full of inexpressible astonishment. It was as if he could not thoroughly understand me. Merry voices and the steps of several persons approached the drawing-room door from the hall. I betook myself to the door which led to Selma's chamber. Here, with my hand upon the lock, I turned round and looked at Brenner. He stood immovable, his eyes directed to me ; their expression I cannot describe, and I could not rightly comprehend ; but I read in

them an eternal farewell; and, with a soul assailed by indescribable and contending feelings, I fled to my room. That which I felt to be the bitterest and the most painful at this moment was that Brenner and I were for ever separated. I called up anew Mrs. Z., in her whole terrible shape, and Brenner's conduct to her, in order to excuse and to explain my own conduct; but then came the remembrance of Brenner's last look—that strange look, which went through bone and marrow, and all his culpability vanished, and I alone was the guilty one, the one worthy of condemnation.

I was interrupted in this combat by Selma, who besought me to join the company. I thought at first to excuse myself; but when I found that Lennartson was there, a thought or suspicion arose within me, and I followed Selma.

I had a fever from excitement of mind. I soon observed that Lennartson's glance was directed to me with an inquiring expression, and soon also he seated himself on the corner of a sofa, and said in a low voice:

"As I came here this evening, I found Brenner alone in the drawing-room, in a strange state, and he could or would not give any explanation of it. Have you seen him this evening?"

"I pray you," said I, and answered his question by another, "tell me whether it be true, as I have lately heard, that within these few days a marriage has been spoken of betwixt Brenner and Mrs. Z.? You are Brenner's friend, you must know."

"I cannot deny it," replied the Baron, smiling.

"Is it true that a marriage was spoken of?"

"Yes, actually was spoken of."

"He has then really paid his addresses to her?"

"Hum! that is again another question," said Lennartson, smiling.

"How! Did you not say that a marriage had been spoken of?"

"Does it then follow of necessity that *he* must have made the proposal?"

"Not? I fancied so. I pray you jest not in this affair, but tell me out plainly how it hangs together. It is to me inexpressibly important—more important than I can say."

"Well, then, what I know of the affair is, in a few words,

this : Mrs. Z. wished to have Wilhelm Brenner for her husband ; he did not wish her altogether for his wife. A third person went with the proposal—and with the refusal to and fro between them.”

“ Oh, God ! is it possible ? And—pardon me !—From whom do you know this ?—From Brenner himself ? ”

“ No, certainly not ; but exactly from this third person, who ought for two reasons to bid adieu to the office of spokesman. It pleases me, Miss Adelan, to be able to give you an explanation of an affair in which you have been so badly informed. And now—best Miss Sophia, permit me, as Brenner’s and your friend, a question. What is the occasion of his strange state of mind this evening ? ”

“ It is my fault ! my unpardonable fault ! ” I could say no more ; I was crushed to pieces.

Lennartson was silent ; he regarded me with his serious prudent eyes. After a minute’s silence, he said gently, almost flatteringly :

“ I shall probably see him to-night. May I not take to him from you a message—some kind of greeting ? ”

“ Ah, what is the use of it ? He cannot, he ought not to forgive me ! We are separated for ever through my fault—through my unworthy mistrust. But, if you will, impart to him this our conversation.”

And with this it was ended ; but now began for me the pangs of conscience.

Oh, what talisman is there indeed against the bitter crushing feeling of having been unjust towards a noble friend—having cruelly wounded his heart, his dearest feeling ; to have murdered the faith in that which he loved—to have disturbed his happiness ! And for such a deed no comfort can be found. Oh, Wilhelm Brenner ! now I understand thy looks full of condemnation, and full of godlike sorrow over me. Yet when thou knowest that I have bathed my pillow with tears, and yet in the midst of my suffering felt a proud joy over me, and thanked God that I can bear thy image clear in my breast, wouldst thou—wouldst thou not forgive me ?

I passed the night without slumbering in the least. I waited for the morning with impatience—I hoped that with it Lennartson would come. The morning came, grey and

cold, and no Lennartson, and no single sunbeam in my nocturnal soul. One hour went after the other—that waiting was insufferable to me; read I could not, music was to me a torment, and the most common topics of conversation only increased my anguish. All at once the proverb came into my mind—

That which wounds the heel wounds not the soul;

and at the same time the hill of difficulty came before my inmost mind, and it seemed to me a particular refreshment to ascend this. I felt the necessity of calming the soul by the fatigue of the body; and with an advertisement out of the daily paper in my reticule, I rambled in mist and cold towards the South, up the heaven-aspiring mountain, far forth upon the endless street which begins on the other side of the same. Our own state of mind often lends its colour to objects, but on this day my state of mind and the objects which met me had actually a deep sympathy. The advertisement led me to a dwelling where mould and damp covered the walls. Neither was it to be wondered at that the pale dropsy abode there. On the long ill-built street I saw a herd of ragged, pale children, old women and aged men, living pictures of sickness, of poverty, and age; and I contemplated misery in all gradations of human life—in all its weeping shadows.

And amid all these shadow-figures there yet probably was not one who would have exchanged his lot with mine, if he could have seen into my heart. Ah! the severest kind of wretchedness is not that which exhibits its rags in the streets, and at night conceals itself in great deserted buildings—it is that which smiles in polite companies, which shows to the world a joyful exterior whilst sorrow gnaws its heart.

Had I been somewhat more joyous of mood, I might have thought with pleasure on the round earthen jugs which many carried in their hands, and on the warm soup which Mercy cooks by the never-extinguished fire, and which now these poor people were carrying, yet steaming, for their dinners.

When I came home, I hoped for some word, for some tidings. But no, nothing! Several hours have passed. Perhaps Lennartson comes this evening.

Evening.

No, he came not. I have obtained by management news of Brenner. HE DID NOT GO HOME LAST NIGHT.

The 3rd.

Again a sleepless night. It is again morning. Whither shall I go to-day?

"When a man is no longer his own friend, then goes he to his brother, who is so still, that he may talk gently with him, and may give him life."

These words of Jean Paul awoke in me the desire to go to my Selma, but I was ashamed of the confession which I had to make to her. She then came to me with her lovely eyes, and asked so tenderly, so sorrowfully, the cause of my distress, I could do no other than let her look into my heart. And how tenderly she comforted me! How warmly she defended me from my own self-accusations! How clearly she saw before us the hour of reconciliation! Ah, I dare not hope for this! If I could only know how it now is with him, how he feels towards me.

Evening.

I know now. Lennartson came in the afternoon, but not gaily.

Yet it is good that he came. I could hardly have supported such another night. To my inquiring look, he said immediately:

"I have just seen Brenner; I have communicated to him our conversation here that evening."

"Well, then, and he——" asked I, almost lifeless.

"He said, he had himself imagined that some kind of misunderstanding must have been the occasion of—what he did not say."

"And besides that—did he say nothing?"

"He added, if anybody had said to me anything bad of her, I should not have believed it."

"And that was all! Said he nothing more?"

"No!" said Lennartson; "but it was evident that he had suffered much in mind, and suffered still. What unfortunate misunderstanding has put you both so out of tune with each other, separated two beings who I fancied should—but you are not separated. That is impossible. I know Brenner's

heart. Give me a word, a cordial word for him, and—let me conduct him to your feet.”

“Impossible! I pray you do nothing now in this affair. You would not wish that yourself, if you knew all. Tell me only—do you think that Brenner cherishes any hatred towards me?”

“Hatred is a feeling which cannot easily find place in Brenner’s heart, and certainly never towards you. The words which he says of you, he speaks with seriousness and tenderness.”

“Thus I may hope then that he does not abhor me. This is much. I thank you from my heart for your kindness.”

“Thank me, by giving me a soothing greeting for my friend. He looked to me as if he had not slept for several nights, and would not be able to sleep for yet more.”

“Tell him that neither have I slept, since—and now let us not talk further on this affair. It belongs to the things which must alone depend upon our Lord’s guidance.”

Lennartson bowed with quiet seriousness, and as he saw me weep he took my hand, and spoke gentle words with the voice of an angel. Oh, how good is he too!

It is Twelve at Night.

I am now calmer. I have arrived at certainty. It is then ended, this friendship which gave me so very much pleasure, which was to last into eternity, ended through my fault.

* * * * *

I found in the stream of life a costly pearl, but I threw it heedlessly away. I deserved it not.

* * * * *

“If they had told me anything bad of her I should not have believed it.” What a crushing reproof for me is there in these loving words!

But I deserve all this. Therefore I will bear it without complaint. I shall not sleep this night, perhaps not for many nights. I wish I knew that he slept.

Without, it is restless. Clouds driven by the northern tempest fly over the castle. The lamps on the bridge and on the quay flicker; their light trembles in the agitated waters; one after the other is extinguished in the storm. Poor flickering flames, good night!

The 7th.

Brenner has set out, on the business of the fleet, to several of the seaport towns of Sweden. He will be absent several weeks. That is good.

It is cold to-day, clear air and cold. The snow lies upon the ice of the Riddarfjerd, upon the southern mountains, white and still—still and cold as indifference. I will lay it upon my heart. Yet no! that will I not. Let it suffer still.

I was too proud of my philosophy, of my strength and prudence, and am—punished. Burn therefore thou holy pain, thou purifying fire; burn to the very roots this selfish vain temper. Burn and consume!

In the Evening.

I shall overcome this suffering; I feel that I shall overcome it, for I have a clear, inward presentiment that he has forgiven me, that he feels and thinks mercifully towards me. And for the first time I feel the necessity of the mercy and the compassion of a fellow-being. Such presentiments of the state of feeling of persons who are dear to me I have often had, as well in bad as in good, and they have never yet deceived me.

The sentiment which united Brenner and me has really not been of a common kind, nor can the over-hastiness of a moment annihilate it. It is deeply based in the nature of our being. And I know it. Wilhelm Brenner, we shall yet once more meet and be united in sincerity, in harmony, even if it first be when the scene of this life is ended; I know it, and never have felt more certain than in this moment, when we are apparently more separated than ever.

I have written to Brenner. Words like those which I said here. They will meet him when he returns to Stockholm.

To-night the stars glow brighter. No cloud overshadows them. Good night, Wilhelm! To-night thou wilt sleep, to-night I also shall sleep, and to-morrow I shall again wholly live for mankind, for the interests which surround me. Thou hast given to me an example of activity, and I will follow it.

The 11th.

And the drama which is being acted in my neighbourhood demands truly all attention. I seek still for the thread

which can lead the captives out of the labyrinth; but that St. Orme is the Minotaur I see plainly; and it seems as if Flora's prophecy of herself, that she was possessed by his evil nature, was really about to be fulfilled. But why should Selma become her victim; why should the sylph lose her wings in the struggle? Selma has been for some time an actual martyr to Flora's perpetually unhappy temper, who seems to have a certain delight in tormenting her with ill-humour, with severity, and with absurd suspicions. Selma bears this with wonderful gentleness, but—the joyous song is silenced, and the light dancing gait becomes ever stiller.

Yesterday I poured out before her the vial of my wrath against Flora.

"Forgive her," prayed Selma, with her beautiful, tearful eyes; "she is herself so unhappy!"

And this is true. My stepmother, who does not understand Flora's condition, but who would willingly see all around her joyful, endeavours to cheer her by all kinds of dissipations and pleasures; but these now appear to have lost all power over Flora, whilst her evil demon strikes his talons ever deeper into her life.

Towards evening, when the few visitors had left us, and we ladies of the family were together with St. Orme, Flora stood a long time sunk in thought before the portrait of Beatrice Cenci.

"Do you think of copying that lady, that you contemplate her so exactly?" asked St. Orme, in his scornful, disagreeable tone.

"Perhaps!" replied Flora, in a voice which sounded almost terrible. "Then," continued she, in an altered tone, "I endeavour to fancy how she felt in mind."

"Before or after the murder of her father?" asked St. Orme, as before.

"After," replied Flora. "Before, I understand; I know."

"How, my sweet Flora, how can you enter into such horrible thoughts?"

"Yes, I can do so," replied Flora. "She had attempted everything—everything, St. Orme—to free herself from her unhappy condition; she did not express her pangs. She was reduced to the most extreme point, was reduced to despair—in short, I understand her deed; but after it—after it—"

"Why, yes," rejoined St. Orme, "after it, she thought on the preparation for her own death, on the scaffold, on the executioner!"

"It is related," continued Flora, "that at the moment in which she went to death, at the moment when she must ascend the scaffold, a stream of words burst from her lips, so full of joy and thankfulness, so full of what is most beautiful and most sublime in the human soul, that they who should have consoled her were dumb, and their pity changed itself into admiration: it is said that never was her beauty more touching, her look more beaming, than at the moment when she, as a penitent, but ransomed sinner, met death enfranchised and victorious!—nor is that a wonder to me. But I do wonder how she felt—ah! how she felt herself to be free! free and happy! I do wonder how she felt, I do wonder how she felt, I do wonder how——"

Flora repeated these words several times like an insane person, and sank suddenly to the floor.

Our astonishment was great. Flora was carried into Selma's chamber, and here our attentions soon brought her again to consciousness, but only to fall into a hysterical state, after which she only sunk into repose after the lapse of a few hours.

When she again awoke it was night. She lay still, her eyes fixed upon Virginia's portrait, that hung at the foot of Selma's bed (on which Flora lay), and said passionately to herself:

"She, too, was lovely and unhappy; she, too, died in the bloom of her age, died of a broken heart. But she died, killed by her still suffering—like many a woman, died without glory and revenge. Beatrice was the happier of the two."

"The Eternal Judge only knows that," said I, with gentle voice.

"Yes, what do we know?" continued Flora. "I know nothing, excepting that I am more unfortunate than these two. It is strange, but for some time thoughts on a bloody action, on a murder, for instance, have something refreshing in them. A great change must take place in the souls of men who have done something terrible—something that admits of no return, no uncertainty, no fear, no hope more.

Then, indeed, might the juggling spirit depart, and the human being comprehend himself! It might become calm and cool in the heart, when the hour of death is near, and all is past from earth; feelings might arise—feelings of humiliation and subjection, and then—there perhaps might come some angel of the Lord, and kindle a light in the dark soul ere one died. But thus will man die? Die, be laid low in the black earth; moulder, turn to dust, be trampled of men—ha! no! no! I will not die. No. Why is it so dark within me? why do you let me lie as in a funeral vault? Bring me more light. And Selma! where is she? She used to love me. But she has left me, like all the rest!”

“Never! never!” replied an affectionate voice, and from the depths of the alcove, on the other side of Flora’s bed’s-head, arose slowly Selma’s white-garmented beautiful figure. She took Flora’s hand in hers, and besought her with tears:

“Oh, Flora, Flora! if you yet love me, hear what I have to say to you. You are day by day more unlike yourself; there lies some heavy secret at your heart which makes you unhappy. Oh speak, Flora, tell us what it is—tell us all! You know how we love you. How possible it will be for us to find out some means of consoling and calming you! Oh, confide in us! How free will you feel when you have opened your heart, and have become clear to those who love you!”

“Clear!” repeated Flora, “and if I were to open my heart, and it were to appear merely darker to you than before! Selma, how should you bear that?”

“Ah! I could bear all, except seeing you so unhappy and so changed as you are!”

“You think so,” said Flora, “but you deceive yourself. You belong to the good, to the discreet, who abominate everything that is unusual and eccentric, because they consider it wrong, because they do not understand it. They cannot look the reality in the face without trembling; they do not love, except through illusions, which they have no strength to—but forgive me, I will not be severe. I myself need help and forbearance. Help me, you cannot, Selma, nobody can—but you can soften the struggle. And now—will you read something to me, something which will calm me?—what have you there? The hymn-book! Read something from it, if you will. It is a long time since I looked into such a one.”

As I left the two young friends, I heard Selma read with a voice which she endeavoured to make firm.

How the whole earth reposes.

The next day Flora was better ; but Selma's countenance bore the traces of a deeply-depressed mind. I proposed to her, after breakfast, to go to the Museum to see some new statues which had lately come there. She willingly consented ; Flora declined the invitation to accompany us, which was not unpleasant to me.

We had not been long among the noble works of art before I saw the young pupil of Ehrensvärd become cheerful, and whilst contemplating the beautiful and the sublime, her soul freed itself from the burden which bowed it down. I acknowledged with joy how a cultivated taste for art or nature can release the human soul from the pang which is called forth by the pressure of circumstances, or by the excitability of the heart. Yet he cannot always be released from it, neither should he be. There are sufferings which are more elevating than all enjoyments, I mean nobler. These must not be annihilated. They may free us, they may give us wings. Even the larva of suffering can receive wings, can fly in the night, and be lighted by its stars, and bathe in its dew.

A tender melancholy displaced more and more the suffering, dejected expression of Selma's countenance, as my observations excited her to think and to express her thoughts.

At Niobe's statue I said, that Niobe appeared to me too unfeeling ; I wished to see in her countenance more despair, more anger.

"She combats with higher powers," replied Selma ; "neither revenge nor hope are possible to her. Besides, this is the first time that she knows misfortune ; and it comes so suddenly, so mightily, that it overpowers her ; she cannot suffer much, she is stunned. See ! observe her from this side ; see the expression of trembling pain about her mouth. One sees that there needs only one movement, only one arrow now, and she suffers no more ; she is turned to stone."

I looked at Selma. There was at this moment a strange resemblance between Niobe's expression and hers. It seemed to me that thus would she suffer, thus turn to stone. But God defend my young sister !

When we reached the antique head of Zeno I said, "Do you not see in this countenance, as if it were a prototype of Christendom?"

"Yes," replied she; "it is the renunciation, but without the exaltation."

She would not turn to stone; thought I again, with a look at her countenance beaming with soul, she would free herself, she would conquer herself. The sylph would not lose her wings for long.

We now heard somebody whispering near us:

"Lieutenant Thure does not go to the ball to-night. It is very vexatious."

"Nor the royal secretary, Von Bure, either. Yet he told me that he would come for my sake. But one cannot depend on the gentlemen. He had as good as engaged me for the first waltz. I will be really ungracious the next time he comes, and is so civil."

"Yes, it seemed as if you had made a conquest——Do you not think that the marble head there is like Von Bure? Do you know what sweet thing he said to me last evening?"

The sweet thing was said so softly, that I did not hear it. We had already recognised Hilda and Thilda Engel, who were complaining of their lovers before the bust of Septimus Severus. They were now aware of us, and we mutually saluted each other. As it now began to be cold in the marble gallery, I proposed that we should take a walk towards the park, across the Skeppsholm, and we asked the Engels if they would accompany us. "They would indeed, gladly, but——four ladies without one gentlemen——how would that be?"

Selma and I assured them, laughing, that it would be excellent; especially if we went two and two; and we wandered off, each with an Engel (angel) by her side, but had considerable weariness therefrom.

Outside the park we met Mrs. Rittersvård and her daughter. They were cordially friendly, and so merry that it infected us. Mrs. Rittersvård was much better as regarded her health, and Hellfrid was quite happy to be again after a long time in the fresh wood. It was glorious. The snow melted in the noonday sun, the fir shoots gave forth fragrance, and lichens and mosses grew greenly fresh in the field, and on the tree stems. Hellfrid was an old acquaint-

ance of all these, and related in answer to Selma's and my questions, so much of their lives and peculiarities, as excited a great desire in our minds to become better acquainted with these children of nature. In the mean time we wished Hellfrid joy of this her knowledge and fresh spring of enjoyment.

But the Engels became ever more and more sullen, and I recognised in them that lamentable poverty of soul which our mode of education often fosters, and which often causes people, in the midst of treasures of art and nature, to have thought and memory only for a——ball lover. Thus were we now, six ladies, and—no gentleman! Fate was cruel to the poor children. Their looks animated themselves, however, as two young gentlemen, arm in arm, approached us, and I heard them whisper the names of Thure and Bure. But Thure and Bure bowed and—passed by! The Engels looked desperate.

Again a gentleman approached us; and this one passed us not by, but, after an exclamation of joyful surprise and friendly salutation, accompanied us back to the city. It was Lieutenant Sparrsköld. But he walked beside Hellfrid Rittersvärd. Hilda and Thilda walked with one another.

At a hint from her mother, Hellfrid invited them and the rest of the party to go and drink a cup of chocolate in the shadow of her hyacinths. The Engels declined the invitation with a look of ill-humour, but Selma, young Sparrsköld, and I, accepted with pleasure the friendly invitation.

In the shade of Hellfrid's fragrant hyacinths we drank excellent chocolate, and had a lively and interesting conversation on the way, of best improving and using life and time.

Nobody was better pleased to hear about this than the good old lady, who finds even now life to be so affluent and so full of interest, that she wakes herself every morning at six o'clock from fear of wasting time, which for her flies too fast.

Young Sparrsköld declared jestingly, that people did a great deal better to sleep; and with that kissed her hand with filial, yes, almost childlike tenderness.

Hellfrid looked on both with tears in her eyes.

A horrible catastrophe changed this scene of love and goodwill, into one of horror. A dull pistol-shot was heard, and seemed to have been fired in the room under that where we were. Sparrsköld sprung up.

"It was in Captain Rummel's room!" exclaimed he; and, as if seized upon by a horrible foreboding, rushed from the room. A quarter of an hour after this he came up again, very pale. Captain Rummel has shot himself! All was already over with him. People had for some time talked of his deranged affairs, and of his inclination for strong liquors; he seemed already to have laboured at his own ruin. This was now accomplished.

Excited and horrified, we separated.

"He was one of Felix's intimate acquaintance," said Selma, on our homeward way. "May he not——" She did not conclude.

It was terrible news with which we had now to surprise my stepmother.

The 13th.

Captain Rummel's unfortunate end quickly flew through the city. The Lady-Commissioners-of-Commerce informed us to-day that "people said that he had handled too freely the money of the regiment; that he could no longer conceal this, and would not outlive his disgrace; that one and another young gentleman, sons of rich families, who were involved in Rummel's affairs, had fled. People said that several occurrences similar to this would follow."

From the misfortune, however, one good thing has arisen. Åke Sparrsköld was Rummel's next successor, and received the company after him. Nothing then hinders any longer his and Hellfrid's union, and the happiness of the whole family.

The 14th.

The Rutschenfelts now also have driven off! "God preserve Felix!" with these words my stepmother entered at noon, and was so cast down by the news and so uneasy about its consequences, that all thoughts of startling me, and all the Metternich deportment, were forgotten.

Among those who have made their escape for debt, are the Mr. Bravanders (the same who on New-Year's-day challenged the devil so industriously to fetch them).

The 15th.

"Has Felix been here? Do you know anything of him?" asked Lennartson to-day, as he entered the drawing-room;

and as we answered in the negative he appeared vexed, although he tried to conceal it. St. Orme, the Chamberlain, and a few other gentlemen, together with Lennartson, were here to dinner. The conversation soon turned to the Rut-schenfelts again, who in part had taken flight, and in part were suspected of designing to take flight. Many persons were mentioned whom they had deceived, who had been robbed by them of the little which they possessed; families who were sunk in the deepest sorrow; mothers, brides, whose hope was annihilated, whose future was for ever darkened. The old, venerable father of one of the fugitives had had a stroke in consequence of his grief—but it would be going too far to draw forth all the misfortune which was now passingly spoken of.

Lennartson was silent in the mean time, but I gave vent to my heart in a few excited words. St. Orme, who always sets himself in opposition to me, shrugged his shoulders at the tragical way in which people took such every-day affairs, the fuss which people made about a young man's youthful follies. He, for his part, pitied them sincerely, but he judged no man; people must not be too severe against the young. They must have time to run out their course; after this they returned to sense and prudence.

"That is very well said," remarked the Chamberlain, with a fine voice and fine satire, "and for my part, I will always say, 'the blessed (late) Rummel,' although I will not take an oath that the blessed man really is blessed; still I think that people should pay their debts and live decently in the world, and I think that it is rather venturesome to go over into the other, like Rum——like the blessed Rummel."

Lennartson now took up the affair, and with great seriousness; and fixing a quiet firm glance on St. Orme, he censured the conduct which had been described, and the temper of mind which could find it innocent. He described the operation of this on social life in general; he described a people in its decline—laxity of principle, its poisoned root—lust of pleasure and frivolity, taking the upper hand—the sanctity of a promise despised—order and honesty fled—with them confidence, security, readiness to oblige, all pure, all beneficial sentiments—all human ties poisoned—the sanctity and fresh gladness of life fled for ever. Thus was it with the old nations

as they advanced towards their dissolution, towards their ignominious tardy death, a spectacle for pity and contempt. Thus will it be with us, if we do not seize with earnestness on life and on ourselves. "I wish," continued Lennartson, whilst his eyes flashed and the words came like thunder from his lips—"I wish that all honest men would brand with their abhorrence, and the better part of social life with its scorn, all those idlers, those young deceivers, who sacrifice all for the sake of satisfying their bad passions. I know only one character more worthy of punishment, more despicable than these, and that is he who, under the guise of cleverness, poisons their principles; under the guise of friendship seduces them to misery, whilst he makes them the instruments, the victims of his selfishness, of his low schemes—in one word, the snake in social life, the calculating seducer!"

Was it the intention of Lennartson to hurl a lightning flash at St. Orme, or was it the evil conscience of the latter which seemed to strike him; but certain it is, that for the first time I saw him deprived of scornful assurance, for the first time saw him smitten and confused. The blood had vanished from his cheeks. He attempted to smile, but the thin lips trembled convulsively. Flora saw him with amazement, and a sort of enjoyment! She seemed to feast on his pangs. She laughed—hideously—there was a stillness as of death at the table, and at once my stepmother made the move to rise, although the dessert had not been served, and all followed readily.

St. Orme recovered himself; we heard him soon after laughing and joking with the Chamberlain, but his laugh was not natural. He soon left the company, after he had cast a keen, poisonous glance on Lennartson.

When our guests were gone, we were all of us extremely out of tune. I endeavoured to fix my stepmother's attention by one of the questions of the day, but it did not succeed.

It succeeded much better with the "Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce," who came full of news, which they were as desirous of imparting as we of hearing. It concerned for the most part the Rutschenfelt company, and the disorder and misery which the fugitives had left behind them; the causes of the ruin of young men were also spoken of—among these were often mentioned unwise parents, bad example, neglected oversight in youth. With all these sorrowful relations, Mrs.

and Miss P. helped us through the long evening. During this, two messengers had been sent to inquire after Felix, but they had not met with him at home.

After people had separated for the night, Selma and I lingered, as we often do, among the pictures in the inner drawing-room, and contemplated them by the soft lamplight. Selma stood long before a painting after Guido Reni, which represents St. Michael, who, with the flames of anger in his divinely beautiful countenance, plants his foot upon the breast of Satan, and pierces him with his spear.

"Why does my Selma look at this picture so long?" asked I, joining her; "it has something quite horrible in it."

"But something quite beautiful also," replied she. "It teaches us to understand what a holy anger is. Look at St. Michael's countenance! Tell me, does it remind you of—is it not like"—Selma paused, and crimsoned with confusion.

"Lennartson, as we saw him to-day," said I, ending her sentence; and Selma's look told me that I had expressed her thoughts.

We were now disturbed by some one who opened the door of the drawing-room. It was the figure of a man wrapped in a wide cloak. This was thrown off, and we recognised Felix Delphin. But how changed he was! The pale, disfigured countenance had scarcely a trace of its former beauty.

"Selma!" said he, with an agitated voice, "do not be afraid of me. I will merely say farewell to you, before——"

"Before what, Felix?"

"Before I leave you and Sweden for ever! Oh, Selma! I wished to see you once more, that I might pray you to think of me, and to pray for me when I am far from you!"

"Felix, why must you go?"

"Why, because I am—ruined, ruined by my weakness, by my folly. Property, health, honour, all are lost! I cannot, I will not live over my disgrace here."

"But is there no help? Cannot Lennartson——"

"No! once before he rescued me from the hands of the usurer. Then I gave him my word of honour never again to be betrayed into them. I have broken this. Rather would I die than meet his look!"

"But I, but Flora! We are your nearest relations; we have some jewels——"

"Hush, good angel! I am not sunk yet so deep as to

avail myself of—and besides, what purpose would that serve? Ah, Selma! all must now be ended between us. Here, have you your ring again. I am not worthy of you. Pray Lennartson to forgive me! Give my love to Flora! May she be worthy of him! And you, good angel—heaven bless you! Farewell!”

He kissed the folds of her dress, and was about to rush out, but was prevented by a man who stepped in the doorway and seized his arm with a stern——

“Whither, Felix?”

It was Lennartson. Felix gasped for breath, but in the next moment he made a violent effort to tear himself loose and to fly, but the Baron held him with a strong hand, and said sternly:

“Be quiet, boy! no stupidity! Will you make a scene before the people outside? Besides, this avails you nothing now. You now *must* follow me!”

“You will dishonour me!” stammered Felix, pale with impotent frenzy.

“*You* will dishonour yourself, but *I* will save you even against your own will,” said Lennartson.

“It is too late!” exclaimed Felix.

“It is *not* too late,” answered Lennartson. “I know all, and I promise to save you; and to this end I demand only one thing from you, that you at this moment enter into a bond with me, body and soul, and take not one step without my will or knowledge, but obey me in all things. And in the first place, I desire that you follow quietly to my carriage, which stands before the door.”

Lennartson had said all this with a low voice, as if he would be heard by Felix only, but the strong emphasis which he laid upon his words caused me, although I stood at a distance, not to lose one of them. Felix seemed annihilated; his will was subjected to that of a mightier than himself, but he could scarcely endure himself. He supported himself almost fainting against the wall.

“Lean on me,” said Lennartson, quickly and tenderly, as he took the youth in his arms—“why are you afraid? Am I not your friend, your fatherly friend? Confide yourself to me! Come! be a man!”

Felix took courage truly at these words, and said mildly:

"Do with me what you will, I will obey."

Lennartson seeing that he hesitated, seized his arm, nodded to us kindly but deprecatingly, as we were about to call for help, and with a look which said "Be calm," led the unfortunate young man away.

Selma threw herself into my arms agitated by excited feelings. I did not leave her through the night, which past sleeplessly for us both, and I have written this in her chamber.

The 17th.

Felix is ill, but they say not dangerously. They have bled him, and Lennartson has watched by him through the whole night. Flora has also come this moment from him, and I am glad to see her really excited and uneasy about his condition.

In the Afternoon.

Lennartson has just been here, so good, so full of consolation! Felix's affairs are not nearly so bad as he himself imagined. A sudden influx of his creditors, who were alarmed by the flight of his friends, their threats, his entire want of money, together with his ignorance of the real state of his affairs, had occasioned his desperate determination. Lennartson was quite sure of being able to save him out of his embarrassments, although various difficulties were to be overcome.

As we expressed our vexation about the trouble and the time which this wretched business would cost, Lennartson said mildly:

"May Felix only allow himself to be saved by this grave warning! I will then not complain about that which has happened, neither on my account nor on his!"

"How good you are! How infinitely good you are! Ah, that Felix, and we all of us, could only once rightly thank you!" With these words, Selma turned herself involuntarily to Lennartson, with tearful and beaming eyes.

He seemed surprised, and his cheeks coloured as he said:

"Such words from Miss Selma? Can I deserve them? But I will do that, will do anything which in any way can contribute—to make you happy!"

There was melancholy in the earnestness with which he said this, whilst he took Selma's hand, and looked deeply

into her eyes. But her eyelids sank hastily, and she grew pale, whilst she, as it were, retreated before his searching, warm glance. At this moment Flora entered, and threw upon both a look of flaming jealousy. Selma withdrew quickly. Lennartson was silent and abstracted, and soon went away.

Flora then turned to Selma, and said sharply, "That was indeed a very affecting scene which I disturbed! Might one inquire what kind of tender outpourings took place? Silent? It looks as if you all were in compact against me. Selma blushes like a guilty person. You also Selma, you against me also? Yes, then I am solitary, forsaken."

"Flora! Flora! No such words if you will not kill me!" cried Selma, with the expression of the most violent pain, and rushed out.

"Flora!" said I, "you are really not deserving of such a friend as Selma."

"Let me be!" replied she; "I do not trouble myself about the whole world."

I followed Selma, and found her in the room, fallen upon her knees, and with her head bowed in her hands.

"Selma!" prayed I, "do not let Flora's absurd words go to your heart. You yourself know, and so do we all, how innocent you are."

"No! no!" exclaimed Selma, with vehemence. "I am no longer innocent! Oh, Sophia, it is that which makes me unhappy. I am false towards her. I feel it now. Innocent indeed as to all intention, all wishes; but not as to all feelings, all secret thoughts.—Oh, Sophia, I am guilty!"

"That are you not!" said I, confidently; and I now used all my eloquence to reconcile the young girl with herself. I made it clear to her that she would not annul Lennartson's connexion with Flora; nay, even that she would sacrifice her own happiness to promote theirs. This Selma acknowledged, and raised her head. Then I said to her that such a love as hers for such a man as Lennartson was not a sentiment of which any one need be ashamed. It was at the same time both noble and ennobling. And at last I hit upon a happy thought, that of representing myself as a rival of Flora's, but as an obdurate one, because no noble female mind could remain indifferent to manly worth and manly amiability like his; and I, on this ground, gave myself full permission to love Lennartson.

Selma could not help smiling at this, and smiling through tears, she threw her arms round my neck. I left her, reconciled in some measure to herself, to find Flora. She also was in her chamber, and as I entered I saw her hastily concealing in her bosom a small white bottle which she held in her hand; her cheeks became alternately crimson and pale. As I saw how deeply unhappy she was, I talked gently with her; spoke of Selma's purity and tenderness; of all our wishes to see her herself calm and happy. I prayed her with warmth to meet us, and to have confidence in us.

Flora listened to me with a depressed brow, and said all at once, with warmth:

"Sophia! I have been for some time fearfully unhappy! I am afraid of myself. There are moments when I am capable of anything merely to obtain the end—the end! Yes, if it then were merely at *an end*, for ever at an end! But I know—or, more properly, I fear that which may come afterwards! Ah, that nothing can end! I am so weary!—If you have any love for me, do not leave me much alone! I cannot then answer for myself. How the sun out there shines so whitely upon the snow, as if there were no confusion and darkness in the world. It is all one! Will you go with me to the Unknown? Perhaps she may have a composing word for me."

I was willing, and soon ready. We went. But as we neared the house of the Unknown, we found on the narrow path fresh fir-tree twigs strewn upon the snow; it led us to her door, which was fastened. The Unknown had the day before removed to

The death-still, fir-crowned couch,

in the Solna churchyard.

"This door closed also!" said Flora, darkly, as we betook ourselves homeward. But now opened themselves the flood-gates of my eloquence, and in the deep desire to comfort Flora, and in the strong feeling of what life has of great and good, I said many things—well, I believe. But people flatter themselves always in that way. It did not, however, fail entirely, for Flora listened to me calmly, and as we came towards home, she pressed my hand with a friendly, almost melancholy "Thanks, Sophia!" Yet she remained reserved as before.

Ah! I preach wisdom to others, and yet have acted unwisely myself; I try to give comfort, and yet there is no peace in my own heart. At home is disquiet. My stepmother is cool towards me, and yet I know not why.

Wilhelm! Thou with the rich, warm heart, thou who wast open to me at all times, at all times affectionate towards me, where art thou? Oh, what a pang to have wounded thee, to have removed thee! For thee—at thy feet fall these burning, penitent tears. Thou hast never shed such;—well for thee!

The 23rd.

Heavy, black days—days in which life resembles a sleep, where nothing will go forward; not even self-improvement, which ought never to stand still! There hangs, as it were, a heavy cloud over us. Flora is, as usual, torn by restless spirits, and Selma is no longer what she was.

My stepmother is in an excited state of mind. I see plainly that the singular conversations which I have sometimes with one and another in the family do not please her. She looks as if she suspected me of exciting commotions in the house.

Felix in the mean time is better, but his health appears deranged by the irregular life which he has led. He recovers slowly. Lennartson endeavours to animate his mind, and to cheer his spirits. He often spends the evenings in reading Sir Walter Scott's romances to him.

True are the words, "Nobody is so good as the strong."

The 25th.

A little joy! "Åke Sparrsköld and Hellfrid Rittersvård are betrothed!" With these words my stepmother startled me to-day, and was herself enlivened by the occurrence, which has given great pleasure to her good, old friend. My stepmother will, in order to celebrate this betrothal, give next week a *soirée*, which will redound to the honour of the house. She seems to wish by this to check various unquiet reports respecting the affairs of the family which have began to circulate, but as I hope—without foundation. But so long as St. Orme comes stealthily here, and has private conversation with my stepmother, I am not sure. Another bad

sign is also that our "spasmodic acquaintance" have not been seen here for some time.

The 29th.

The cloud sinks lower and lower; it becomes more and more twilight around us. My stepmother wished yesterday to have a new carpet in the great drawing-room for her festival. The old one has long been disagreeable to her, and has besides this several stains; in one word she wished altogether to have a new and handsome carpet. But Selma opposed herself mildly, and said beseechingly, "Ah, let us have no great outlay just now, not till we see how our affairs stand!"

From this I remarked with terror that Selma (who manages the domestic economy of the house) cherished suspicions which she had hitherto concealed from me.

The Philosopher came in at that moment, and said in his gloomy voice:

"The bills, your honour," and laid a bundle of papers on the table. My stepmother threw an uneasy look upon it, and pushed it from her as she said to Selma:

"My sweet girl! look them through—I cannot do it now. It is horrible what a miserable voice Jacob has sometimes. He quite terrifies me—I confess that at times it makes me quite poorly."

Selma embraced her mother silently, took the accounts, and went with them into her own room. My stepmother was still and thoughtful. She leaned her head back on the sofa cushion, and there was something in her handsome pale countenance that went to my heart. It was late in the evening and the lamp burned dim. I fear that shadows of care and anxiety gather around her, and that thereby her face became ever paler, ever older. Quiet wishes for the repose of the grave, for all, pressed through my soul.

The 3rd of April.

To-day after breakfast, as I was alone with my stepmother, she introduced the affair of the carpet. She could not bear the dirty spots. Besides this, we were to have on Wednesday an elegant musical *soirée*. How could one let such a carpet lie on the floor; what would people think of the family that could endure such a one? A new one should be purchased

this very day. I attempted to oppose it a little, spoke of the expense and of the superfluity of such an outlay, and so on; all with the greatest friendship and mildness; but my stepmother took it very ill, and exclaimed at once:

"I must pray you, my best Sophia, not to be at all troubled about my private affairs—and I wish also that in other cases you would not too much rule in my house. I have hitherto been able to rule pretty well and to provide for myself and mine, and I do not think I am quite incapable of doing so still. Emancipate yourself as much as you like, that I cannot prevent; but let me also have my freedom, I beseech of you!"

The absurdity of this sally excited and troubled me at the same time. I sat silent with tearful eyes, and was thinking whether and how I should answer, when we heard St. Orme's voice without in the hall. With a kind of shock my stepmother started and said to me, "Tell him that I am not well, and that I cannot receive him;" and with that she hastened into her room.

"Alone!" exclaimed St. Orme, as he entered, where are the others to-day? I come to say farewell to you for a few weeks. I am intending to go to W——s for a little fresh air and hunting. But I am afraid you will miss me very much?"

I was silent. Jest I could not now, and I could not say to him seriously, as I thought, "It pleases me indescribably that you are going away."

"You are silent!" continued St. Orme, "and who is silent consents, it is said. Where are the other ladies? Will they remain invisible to-day?"

"My stepmother is unwell and can see no one," replied I; "Flora is gone to her brother, and Selma is otherwise engaged."

"Then it looks as if we should have a *tête-à-tête*," continued St. Orme. "I have no objection, because I have one or two things to say to you. Listen, my best cousin! I have several reasons to believe that you are not of the best service to me in this house. What have you against me, if I may ask? Perhaps I have not been polite enough to you, have not flattered you enough? In the mean time, I advise you as a friend, not to intrigue against me, you have '*affaire à trop*'

forte partie ;' you would do better to come over to my side, and persuade Flora to consent to that which she cannot escape."

"I do not understand you," answered I, somewhat proudly, "neither do I understand intrigues; but I mean always to speak out openly my honest thoughts when any one asks for them, and neither flattery nor threats shall prevent my doing so."

"Superb, and Finnish in an especial manner," said St. Orme, as he looked at me, with a cold, sarcastic mien, which would have confused me, if it had not operated in the contrary manner, namely, steeled me. "I see how it is," continued he a moment afterwards with contemptuous coldness, "and I will tell you how it will be. All your Finnish magic arts will be in vain, and the conquest will remain mine yet. Adieu! many greetings. Forget me not!" With this he seized my resisting hand, and shook it with a malicious, triumphant look.

Flora entered at this moment, and her suspicious mind saw a friendly alliance in that which was almost the contrary. She cast some lightning glances upon St. Orme and me, and turned her back to him as he approached her. He then said, coldly:

"*Adieu, belle cousine! au revoir!*" and went.

"How! have you and St. Orme become suddenly such good friends?" asked Flora, as she approached me with almost a wild look. "Have you made a compact with him to betray me? Confess it, confess it honestly, Sophia! You do not wish me to be Lennartson's wife, you consider him too good for me; you wish him to have another. Deny it not! People do not so easily deceive me, and I have seen through you for a long time. But to enter into complot with St. Orme—I did not think that you would have carried your hatred to me so far."

This new injustice caused me more pain than anger. I said, warmly, "Oh, Flora, how unjust you are to me! But you are unhappy, and I forgive you."

With these words I went out of the room.

I found that it was my destiny to-day to be misunderstood at home, and felt a certain longing to go out. I dressed myself therefore, and went.

It was as if the heavy cloud which had rested so long above me now sent down all its lightning flashes upon my head. It seemed to me that I must resemble the scapegoat, and should be burdened with other people's faults and failings; a thousand excited feelings boiled in my breast, till I came out of the city-gate, and felt the air breathe cold upon my brow.

The spirit of spring had breathed upon the earth, and it thawed strongly—foot passengers walked carefully upon the melting ice; glittering drops fell from the roofs. The heavens were the colour of lead; but here and there opened themselves the eyelids of the clouds and sent forth some pale beams of light, which resembled smiles in tears. The air was still and somewhat heavy, but there was a twittering of hundreds of little birds which played in the leafless trees, and these had I know not what strange odour, which reminded me of the sea, and of fir woods, and was full of spring life. I remained standing on the field covered with trees, which is directly opposite to the castle, and drank in full draughts of the spring-air, listened to the rushing of the river, and let my eyes contemplate the manifoldly changing world. Then was it to me as if the spirit of the heaths of Finland blew upon me, and awoke the child-feeling in my soul. Clouds and mist fled, and like singing larks, uprose the bright, the great thoughts which make life beautiful. Conscious purity exercised itself strong in victory, and—in one word, I was as if changed.

I know not whether it is—as one of my friends says—“better to be a magic spirit than nothing;” but certain is it, that there lives in me somewhat of that magic nature which, from the very ancient times, is said to have its home in my native land. This *something* I do not comprehend myself, but I feel it as a *something wonderful*, a momentarily up-flaming strength, which *will* and which *can*. In such moments nothing is impossible to me. I am conscious of a power to loose and to bind the spirits of others. *Primeval words* stir within me; yes, there are moments when I feel that I can enchant human souls to me, and—I do it! In my younger days, I had much of this heathenish magic. This since then has been baptized in the spirit-waves of suffering, christened in the fire of love; but rooted out it is not, and it arises in me sometimes quite unexpectedly. I know that

it has played me many pranks ; but I know also, that when reason has not helped me, magic has, and has given to me both words and songs, to sing myself free from the chains of life, and has enabled me, like the old Wäinemoine, to sing both sun and moon into the thread of my life. And there are moments in which I can turn every stick which may lie as an impediment in my path into a winged steed, upon which I can ride out of the narrow chimneys of life—not exactly to Blåkulla—but forth into the free, fresh, blue space.*

The difficulty in such life-strong moments is the not having any difficulties to overcome, no impediments to conquer, no hero deeds to achieve. That was my sorrowful condition. Because to seek out and purchase a splendid carpet to lay at my stepmother's feet, a carpet with a heaven-blue ground, strewn with stars, flowers, and magic figures, would require no magic power. In the mean time I felt a delight in it ; and whilst in spirit I pleased myself with overcoming St. Orme, Flora, and the whole world, and wrote letters to all my friends—for it is astonishing what I do at such times—I wandered without any plan on the quay by the river, and saw the ice-blocks break up on the Riddarfjärd, and the heaven softly clear itself over the liberated waters. Downwards along the river parterre my "spiritus" led me, and towards the side where the waves boomed most mightily.

Ah ! it was there where I once stood with Wilhelm Brenner, heard the waves rage in his breast, and saw a heaven clear itself in his eyes. And these remembrances seized on my soul with painful power—but—gracious heaven ! Was it indeed true ? Was it he who again stood there, leaning over the iron railing, and looking down into the foaming deep ? It was *he* ! One look was sufficient to convince me of it, and I softly approached him. The magic arose again within me. I knew that he could not escape me, knew that I at this moment should have power over him. What I felt, of life and will and warmth within me, no words could express ; but all this I laid in my hand, and I laid it softly upon his arm. He started up as if touched by an electric spark, and looked strong and full into my face. I looked quietly at him, and merely whispered :

* In case this manuscript should fall into the hands of strangers, I will herewith expressly declare, that this must not be taken literally.

“ Wilhelm ! ”

He continued to look at me, but his glance changed ; it became inexpressibly heartfelt, and with a sigh from the depths of his soul, he said :

“ Sophia, is it thou ? ”

And we were *thou* and *thou*, for we were wholly one at this moment.

Again he said slowly and softly, “ Is it thou, Sophia ? It is a long time since I have seen thee. ”

“ Art thou still angry with me ? ” asked I ; and my tears fell, for I saw by his countenance that he had suffered.

“ I cannot be so,” answered he—“ I cannot be so if I would. Thoughts on thee soften my soul, and when thou lookest on me thus with thy clear, lovely eyes, then methinks that all is good. Thou knowest thy power well, Sophia. ”

“ Oh, Wilhelm ! then we are friends, friends for ever. It cannot indeed be otherwise if my faults do not part us. I never had a brother, but I have wished very much for one. Be to me a brother ! ”

He answered not, but looked at me mildly, although gravely.

But I was happy in this mildness, so happy to have again found my friend, and to be able to feel again the strong inward harmony which united us, that I regarded this new compact as ratified, and talked to him of it out of the fulness of my heart, how it had been between us, and how it yet would be ; of the exalted strength and sweetness of friendship ; of its power to ennoble the heart and to beautify life. He heard me calmly, but he replied not. At length he cut short the discourse rather abruptly by saying :

“ Hast thou been comfortable at home, since I last saw thee ? How do Lennartson and Flora go on ? What is St. Orme doing ? ”

I was happy to open my heart to Brenner, and to be able to tell him what it had endured during his absence. When he heard of St. Orme’s behaviour and threats, the Viking raged, and was about to leave me, to call him to account.

“ He has left Stockholm,” said I hastily, “ and does not return for some time. ” “ Take council of the storm how to still the tempest,” said I to myself, whilst the Viking grumbled at St. Orme for his intrigues, and at Flora for her want of integrity, and at me for not having cleared up the

business, and for not having earlier communicated to him an affair which so nearly concerned Lennartson.

"Now there again," thought I, "I shall always be blamed for misfortune."

"The only thing," continued Brenner, "which consoles me is the secret persuasion that it would be good for Lennartson if he were well rid of Flora. She is in reality not at all suitable for him, and I am very much deceived if he do not himself feel this, and secretly, in the depths of his heart, incline to another—what thinks Sophia? Is not thy sister Selma the one whom he loves, and who, according to my thoughts, is formed to make him happy?"

I could do no other than tell Brenner that I participated in his suspicions and his wishes; but still Flora lay near to my heart. The rich gifts of her soul, her excited and unhappy condition, had fettered me to her.

"When St. Orme comes home again——" said Brenner. He did not end his sentence, but I heard in the depths of his soul that he would compel him to speak out for good or bad.

We were now by my home, and as we were about to separate, I said beseechingly to the Viking:

"Thou wilt come again to us, to me, my brother Wilhelm?"

"Yes! I will come."

"When?"

"When thou wishest it."

"To-morrow?"

"To-morrow!"

"Thanks!"

He pressed my hand kindly and warmly as before, and with a happier and a lighter heart than I had had for a long time, I hastened up to my room, that I there in stillness might sing *Te Deum* out of the fulness of my soul.

I then thought about establishing peace with my stepmother; but for this purpose I must go to work in a diplomatic manner.

People who are intrinsically good always speedily repent of the violence and unreasonableness into which their tempers have misled them; and I now know my stepmother sufficiently to be certain that she was vexed with herself for her excess towards me, and would gladly make the *amende honorable*, if this were only consistent with her character and her

dignity. To come to her now with the new carpet would have been to humiliate her; she could not have borne this and her own injustice. The affair must be managed in another way.

I went down, therefore, and, as if nothing had happened, entered the room where my stepmother was sitting on the sofa with a gloomy and annoyed look, whilst Selma sat reading in a window, and presented myself unaffrighted, as in great want of some black silk for my dress.

"I believe that I have some of the same kind," said my stepmother, rising up hastily from her sofa, and going to her drawer, where several pieces of black silk soon showed themselves, which she, with the most friendly zeal, besought me to take and use. And I allowed myself to take them, together with some beautiful black lace, which I did not want, but which my stepmother, in the warmth of her heart, felt a necessity of giving to me; herewith she ended with a little gratuitous treatise on prohibitive-measures, luxury, and national economy; and of this I also obtained more than I wished. But I was in a grateful state of mind, and received this like the rest, as was right.

As now my stepmother was become so considerably lighter by articles of luxury and learning, I could without any scruple burden her with the carpet; but I determined to wait with it till the next morning. I was now for myself satisfied with the position of affairs, and thought that my stepmother was so too, and betook myself, with peace, to my own room. It was, therefore, a surprise to me as I saw my stepmother enter, and heard her say with the most amiable kindness, and with tears in her eyes:

"I must beg Sophia to forgive my violence this morning: I cannot tell how I could be so disagreeable. But thou knowest well that thy old mother does not mean so ill, though she is sometimes irritable when many things weigh on her temper. In the mean time I can hardly forgive myself——"

This was in truth too much, and I was very near falling at my stepmother's feet, in deep reverential feeling. We, however, sank merely into each other's arms, but never rested we with more heartfelt affection on one another's breast; or, more correctly, that was the first time that we ever had so rested. I was deeply excited, according to my ancient usage

on such occasions. My stepmother was less so; but she spoke well and beautifully of herself and her failings, and of our duty in all ages of life to amend our faults; she thought on this subject with Madame de Genlis—"I cannot bear to hear elderly people say, I am too old to mend. I would rather forgive young ones if they said, I am too young! Because when one is no longer young one must especially labour to perfect oneself, and to replace by good qualities what one loses in the agreeable."

I did justice inwardly to my stepmother and Madame de Genlis,* and noted down the words for my own account; and satisfied with one another, and somewhat satisfied with ourselves, my stepmother and I parted.

The 4th.

The carpet was spread out this morning by the servants of the house, and received my stepmother as she came in to breakfast. She was as much surprised and pleased as I could have wished, and Selma regained her former temper, and danced before her mother upon the stars and flowers of the carpet.

This little scene has diffused some look of joy through the house.

"By presents and exchange of presents is friendship cemented," says one of our prudent old bards.

My stepmother is now full of joyful thoughts respecting our soirée on Wednesday evening, and has desired us, the daughters of the house, to make a handsome and elegant toilet.

April 5th.

The Viking has received the command of the frigate *Desirée*, which sails in spring to the Mediterranean. He remains out perhaps two years. This news startles me. Why will he—yet perhaps it is best so. In the mean time it is hard to me.

The 8th.

Yesterday was our soirée, and right beautiful it was, and turned out well. Flora, who since St. Orme's absence has seemed to breathe more freely, had again one of her times of beauty and bloom. She was dressed as when I saw her at

* But I beg pardon of my stepmother and Madame de Genlis; it is Madame de Sevigné who has said these good words in one of her letters.

first, in crimson gauze. Selma in light blue crape, and I in white muslin and lace. My stepmother contemplated us with pleasure as we assembled ourselves in the room before the guests came, and was proud of her daughters, whom she called *les trois Graces*, and said that I looked "vestal-like."

A quantity of beautiful flowers adorned the room—it was quite festal and beautiful. The new carpet glowed under our feet, and warmed my stepmother's heart.

Such an evening has its fate, like everything else in the world; and if it be not worth while to place much importance upon it, still it is pleasant if the fairy of joy and not of *ennui* holds the sceptre.

A great deal depends upon whether any one in the company can or will take the magic staff in hand; and the sylph did that this evening, and continually spun her invisible flowery chains around the company. As my stepmother herself received all the guests in the inner drawing-room, all collected themselves there, and it was much crowded and very hot. Selma therefore took the arm of Hellfrid Rittersvård, and proposed to her and some other young ladies, that "they should go and found a colony" in the other drawing-room. They did so, and others of the company soon followed them, so that the colony, as Selma jestingly remarked to her young friends, flourished very much in a short time. Gentlemen and ladies did not divide themselves into separate herds as is the usual and wearisome way in our northern assemblies, but joined in little circles, and endeavoured mutually to be agreeable to each other, and a lively and a noisy conversation arose. That we had with us some literary and scientific notables, some "lions" (N.B. of the noblest breed), added importantly to the splendour of the evening. My stepmother was brilliant. Hellfrid Rittersvård and her bridegroom looked inwardly happy, and her agreeable, easy, and calm demeanour diffused as usual gladness around her. A *skål* for her was proposed by my stepmother at supper, and was drank with solemnity.

Flora's sister, "The Beauty," looked this evening uncommonly little of a beauty. One saw plainly that the charm of her youth was over, and that the time approached when people would say, "She does not please me."

For my part I never very much liked Flora's sister, and I

never found that she had more than two thoughts in her soul, "the theatre and dress." But there dwelt this evening on her countenance an expression of dejection and secret pain, which made me seek her out when she withdrew from the animated drawing-room into my stepmother's room, which was merely lighted by a shaded lamp, and adorned with white flowers. In this pretty blooming little world sate the fading "Beauty," supporting her brow upon her hand. I spoke friendly words to her, and my voice must have testified of my sympathy, for by degrees she opened her inmost heart, and this had now interest for me.

"I feel," said she, among other things, "that I have sacrificed too much to the world. The world and mankind are so thankless! I have wished too much to please people. This will now no longer succeed. Now that I am no longer young, nor rich, nor have any longer that which pleases or flatters them, they withdraw themselves and leave me alone, and I—I know not whither I should turn myself. The world seems to grow dark around me—I feel, as it were, a fear of spectres—it is so empty, so desolate—I have nothing which interests me—the days are so long—I have *ennui*!"

The bitter tears which followed these words expressed more strongly even than words the sad feelings of the complainer. And what, indeed, is heavier to bear than the emptiness of life? What indeed is more horrible than that twilight in life, without a star in heaven, without one single little light on earth?

But if one cannot kindle for oneself such a little light? If one can borrow no fire from a good neighbour? Ah! light and warmth, objects of interest, activity and joy, present themselves so abundantly in life, that nothing is more difficult for me to comprehend than that any one can suffer from *ennui*. One must in that case be bound hand and foot, and then one must be released by friendly hands! And a liberated soul, to whom life presents itself in its beauty and its greatness—how glorious!

I felt at this thought like a balloon filled with the air of life, ready to ascend up aloft, and to carry the Beauty with me on the journey—to the sun. I began to talk (as I thought, particularly like the Book of Wisdom) about life and its objects, about mankind and social life, of the rela-

tionship of the individual to the whole, and so on ; and then turned from this to the particular sphere of life of my auditor, and proposed to her that she should adopt a couple of orphan children, and educate them for good and happy human beings.

The Beauty on this looked at me with a pair of large astonished eyes ; "she really had never thought of that," said she, rather coldly, and as if a little affronted at the proposition.

I then spoke of interesting oneself in public institutions ; of the happiness and honour of managing such benevolent establishments, and thus to benefit society by their life and activity. I mentioned my wishes and schemes of living active in this manner ; I spoke of one worthy object, of the excellent institution for the care of outcast children, and proposed to the Beauty, in my zeal, that the next day she should go with me to visit it. Then for the first time I became aware of her looking at me with a countenance that seemed to say, "Is this person actually insane?" and I then observed, too, that I had strained my sails too high. Half smiling at myself, I endeavoured to direct my course towards regions which lay nearer to the sphere of the Beauty ; but I found her to be so strange and stiff towards everything which appeared to me beautiful and cheerful, that I felt myself quite without counsel, and only began to breathe freely when I saw the Chamberlain approaching us. With the zeal with which a person turns from an enemy to a friend, the Baroness Bella turned herself from me to my uncle, and acknowledged with animation all those politenesses which he showed towards her, and among the rest, that he had lent her his box for the last representation of Norma. "I am so full of gratitude," I heard her say to him.

"Ah, my best cousin," replied he, in his jocular tone, "it would be a deal better if you were full of chandeliers ! For I just now need such for one or two rooms, and I know not where to get any that are suitable."

The Baroness Bella answered, laughing, "That although she herself was no furniture-magazine, yet she could give him the address of one where he could get quite divine chandeliers."

The Chamberlain was indescribably glad to be able to get

"divine chandeliers," and was still more glad to be enlightened by the glance and taste of the Baroness Bella. A party was arranged for the next morning to see the chandeliers, and with a side-glance at me, my uncle besought the Beauty to make use of his box at the opera for the next *abonnements-day*. She became still fuller of gratitude, and he still fuller of politeness; I felt myself more and more superfluous during this *tête-à-tête*, and left them somewhat melancholy—but a little amused also.

I returned to the remainder of the company. The Viking was there, but in a grave and almost gloomy humour; he talked with nobody, and did not approach me. That grieved me; the more so as I had not seen him since I had heard of his approaching and adventurous journey. I would gladly have said something to him, but had not the courage. I had this evening no magic tokens in me, but was merely quite an ordinary woman. I saw by the look of the Viking that it was stormy within him, and that made me afraid.

They asked me to play something, and as I seated myself at the pianoforte and saw Brenner approach, it occurred to me that I could converse with him in sound, and in this way would say to him what I could not clothe in words. I selected, therefore, one of Felix Mendelssohn's "*Lieder ohne Worte*," whose character is that under suffering and combat it expresses a something victorious; a song, a poem, the peculiar beauty of which has always deeply spoken to my soul. I played, too, with my whole heart, and wished to infuse into Brenner the feelings which animated me, and to elevate us both above earthly struggles and earthly sufferings. And I thought that he knew, that he understood me.

Lennartson, Selma, and several others had assembled round the piano, and listened to the music. When I had ended, Brenner's honest glance met mine. Lennartson said to him:

"That piece reminds me of the history of your Egyptian vulture, Brenner! Tell it us, and Miss Adelan shall say whether it do not contain the words of this song."

Brenner now related:

"It was in Egypt, near to Thebes. I rambled one morning out into the surrounding desert to hunt, and happened to see a vulture sitting not far from me, among the ruins of fallen

monuments. This bird is known for its strong power of life, and is dangerous to approach when it is wounded; it has a strength almost incredible. I shot at him, and hit him on the breast, and as I believed mortally. He remained, however, sitting quietly in his place, and I rushed to him that I might complete my work, but in that same moment the bird raised itself, and mounted upwards. Blood streamed from his breast, and a part of his entrails fell out, but notwithstanding this he continued to ascend still higher and higher, in wider and wider circles. A few shots which I fired after him produced no effect. It was beautiful, in the vast silent wilderness, to see this bird, mortally wounded, and dyeing the sand with his blood, silently circling upon his immense wings higher and ever higher; the last circuit which he made was unquestionably a quarter of a mile in extent; then I lost sight of him in the blue space of heaven."

"Ah, my stars! To have been in Egypt," now said the Chamberlain with his refined voice, "and to have seen vultures and crocodiles, and such things there! That must have been very interesting."

"Ah! tell us something more about Egypt and the crocodiles there," exclaimed little Miss M.

"Is social life cheerful in Egypt? And how do they carry on conversation?" asked the royal secretary Krusen-berg.

I do not know how Brenner answered these attacks, for I left the circle as they began. During the course of the evening we did not again come in contact, but I saw by his looks, which were often directed to me, that his heart was full; and so, to say the truth, was mine likewise. Brenner's approaching journey, the images which the music and the history of the vulture had called up, agitated me powerfully.

Was it a secret wish of us both, or was it chance merely, I know not in the least—but when all the guests had taken leave, and my stepmother, with Selma and Flora, had accompanied the last out, and now tarried with them in the hall in conversation, Brenner and I found ourselves alone in the white-flowered boudoir. We stood both of us silent; he excited, I embarrassed and depressed.

"Thou wilt take a journey," said I, at length.

He answered not.

"It will be a great journey," said I again; "wilt thou be long away?"

"Yes!" replied he, with half-suppressed vehemence. "Yes, I shall remain away a long time. I go because it is too stifling for me, too confined for me, at home; because if I would live I must seek out free space; because I must hence, to where I no longer see, no longer hear thee!"

He seized my hand and pressed it upon his eyes, and I felt that it was bathed with tears. "Oh!" continued he, "this is childishness! But let me dream for a moment! It will soon be past. Be not afraid, Sophia! I will, I wish nothing more than to see thee for one moment and to be happy in loving thee, and that I *thus* may love thee, although thou hast rejected me. I never loved any one better; I have been happy in the feeling, in the foolish hope that thou shared it with me, that we were made for each other, that thou wouldst wish—but it is past! And after this, my love, near thee, would be my torment. When the storm in my breast has laid itself to rest, I will return to my children and to thee. Think of me when I am far from here—think that my heart belongs not to those which thou mayest despise! Weep not; I do not complain. I wished not to have loved thee less. Upon the waves of the ocean, or in the deserts of Africa, I shall feel myself rich in this love. Wish me not freed from it if thou wishest me not a misfortune. I shall love thee now and for ever. I challenge thee to let it be otherwise, but—it is the last time that I shall speak to thee on this subject. And now farewell! Farewell *my* Sophia! God bless thee!" And before I was able to bethink myself, he had embraced and—left me.

That was a tempest. I was not calm after it; I was not calm for a long time. But if he have found peace upon his stormy sea, I should be satisfied that——

The 15th.

It is many days since he has been here. That is sad, but I dare not murmur. He does that which is right and manly. This tender but proud heart will not complain, will not show its wound; but like the bird of the wilderness, will conceal itself and its pangs in the open, lofty space, where no human eye comes near. He is high and noble-minded, but I——?

A peace pervades the house which we have not known for

a long time. This is occasioned by Flora's more calm and cheerful state of mind. But how long will this continue?

The 19th and 20th, in the Night.

Yesterday Flora was rather unwell, and on that account stayed at home from a dinner party, where my stepmother went with Selma. I have a peculiar friendship for invalids; think that they are my children; and treat them in a manner under which they commonly prosper. It was therefore a little pleasure to me to stay yesterday with Flora, and whilst I tenderly and merrily took the care of her on myself, and we spoke of various horrible things in our great hatred, our hearts neared each other more than they had ever before done. In the afternoon I read aloud to her whilst she lay upon the sofa in the inner drawing-room. As I made a pause in the reading to rest myself, Flora said:

"You are quite too good, Sophia. And if I were but good, that is to say, if I were calm and satisfied, then perhaps, I should be able to thank you as I now cannot.—I am not a bad person, but—but one may be driven out of oneself, one may become insane, if one be hunted and followed as I have been for some time. Have you not observed a great change in me in the last few days? That is because my pursuer has left me at peace. I have known nothing about him for some time; I do not understand—can it indeed be possible that he has left me for ever?—that I am liberated? Ah, that it might be so! You should see a new——"

"How is it here?" inquired a clear, friendly voice: and Signora Luna showed her face at the door. She is always a welcome guest, and though I now wished her in the moon because she had interrupted a conversation which had a great interest for me, still she was received as usual, and threw herself comfortably into a corner of the sofa, and continued with friendly talkativeness.

"It is very pleasant to me to find you two alone, because I shall sit myself down here for the afternoon, and talk about one thing and another which lie at the bottom of my heart. Do you here at home know what report is circulating through the city?"

"Of what? of whom?" inquired I.

"Of Flora. People say that she is to marry St. Orme, and accompany him to Constantinople, where he goes in spring as ambassador. Can it be possible?"

"I truly do not know," said I, with a glance at Flora.

Flora turned pale. "The rattlesnake is near!" whispered she; "I hear him coming."

"Ah! why should not people know things which pass before their eyes?" said Countess G——, half impatiently and half jestingly; "when all things come round then Flora does not herself know whether she be betrothed, and with whom. But what I know is, that I will do all in my power that report may have said that which is untrue. Flora is my own cousin, and I love Flora, and I do not wish her to be unhappy, and unhappy she will be with St. Orme. He is a bad man; that I know. He sacrificed his first wife, and he will do the same by the second too—depend upon me—there is nothing which drags down both soul and body more than an unhappy marriage."

With this the beautiful eyes of the Countess G—— were filled with tears.

At that moment we heard doors violently opened, and proud steps go through the room, and the great Alexander soon entered the apartment where we were sitting. After he had shortly greeted Flora and me, he turned towards his wife, and said with a domineering air:

"I fancy, my friend, that you heard me say this morning that I wished you not to go out this afternoon, but be at home when I came from dining at L——'s."

"Ah, my best friend, I had quite forgotten that. I did not know that the affair was so important."

"Important! It is not my custom to say anything without good reason, and what I said this morning I had well considered, and had sufficient motive for. The determination of a man cannot be deranged by the whims of a woman, and therefore I hope you will be so good as to follow me home immediately."

"My best Alexander, let me stop here quietly, as I am come here. I sit so excellently, and—I have something of importance to talk with my friends about. I will come home to you when this is ended. Let me for once do in the world as I wish."

"Not at all! you will be so good as to accompany me immediately. And if you will have a good reason for it, see here, *I will it!* tout simplement."

"But I also have a will," exclaimed Signora Luna with suddenly kindling energy, whilst her eyes flashed like actual moonstones, "till now it has lain asleep, but if you teach me to use it, it may become stronger than yours. And now I *will* stop here, and not go hence till *I will*. And if you agree not to this separation, I shall soon seek a longer!"

The great Alexander was evidently greatly confounded by this sudden outbreak of will and passion in his usually passive wife. He appeared to be afraid before it, and murmuring something about "ladies' absurdities and caprices," he withdrew.

Scarcely was he gone, when Lennartson came. Countess G—— wished not to see him in the excited state in which she was, and went therefore into another room. There she said to me, after she had composed herself:

"It will be the best that I go away after a little while. I wish not to annoy him in earnest, but only to show him that he must not go too far with his power. There is much that is good in Alexander, and there would have been much more had he not busied himself so much with Aristotle. Aristotle and logic have quite bewildered him. It is no use such men liking to humiliate women; then they are directly tyrants, and I shall show Alexander—but go in, Sophia, Flora looked anxious as you came out; go in, and do not trouble yourself about me;—I will go my way softly and quietly when I think that it is time, for he must wait a little while; afterwards—but go in, go in!"

I followed the injunction, curious to see what had taken place between Lennartson and Flora.

When I came in, Flora was reading a letter which Lennartson seemed to have given her, and he stood in the window with his serious eyes fixed inquiringly upon her. She was quite pale, and said at the moment in which she laid down the letter:

"I cannot read it—it is black before my eyes! Read the letter aloud to me, Lennartson; Sophia may willingly hear all!"

Lennartson took the letter and read aloud with a firm

voice. It contained a warning to Lennartson not to form any connexion with Flora, together with an exhortation to break off such a connexion in case it were formed. Flora was already bound by the *ties of love and honour* to another, and proofs of this would be made public if this exhortation were not attended to. The writer would not willingly resort to extremities; and if Lennartson quietly withdrew from Flora, then everything which could impeach her should be buried in silence. The letter was subscribed "Anonymous," and was evidently written in a feigned hand.

No longer in a condition to control herself, Flora exclaimed with frenzy:

"Mean, crafty, detestable St. Orme!"

"Then it is *he!*" said Lennartson, with a flaming glance, "it is he who is this disturber of peace! I have suspected it long; and now, Flora, now I *will* know what right, what ground he has for doing so. This hour must end our connexion, or cement it for ever. I have more than once besought for your full confidence—to-day, I must *demand* it."

"You shall know all," exclaimed Flora, with determination—"and you shall be my judge. But, oh, Thorsten! remember that even God's highest judgment is—mercy!"

Lennartson made no reply; he sate grave and dark, and seemed to wait for Flora's confession.

"Well, then," replied she, whilst she seemed powerfully to control herself, "all then may be said. This St. Orme, when he was in Stockholm five years ago, paid his homage to me, and acquired—a certain power over me. His bold confidence, his talents, his powers of mind, which I then regarded as quite extraordinary, made an impression upon me. I fancied that I loved him. He misused my blindness, my inexperience, in order to seduce me into an exchange of letters, and the promise of eternal love and the like. St. Orme, however, troubled himself but little in the fulfilment of the promises which he made to me. I was at that time poor, and he left me for a journey to Paris, whence for a long time I heard nothing of him. In the mean time I became acquainted with you, Lennartson, and learned what real love is. I regarded myself as forgotten by St. Orme, and forgot also him and my childish, foolish promises. Ah! I forgot the whole world, when you, Lennartson, offered me your

heart, and life dawned for me in new beauty. But I was now rich, and St. Orme came again and asserted his old pretensions. He had forgotten Flora, but he called to mind the heiress. And I knew well that he sought not after my heart, but after my property; I loved him no longer, but—but I was obliged to conciliate him, and to operate in kindness upon his hard heart, in order to obtain those imprudent, unfortunate letters which he had in his power, and which he dishonourably threatened to produce against me if I did not break off my engagement with you, and consent to give him my hand. See, then, Lennartson, the secret, the many months of darkness, contention, and opposition, of my existence. I hoped for a long time to be able to conquer him; I have combated long—but this hour shows me that all is in vain. St. Orme has driven me to the utmost extremity; to this confession, which my pride, my womanly shame, my love to you, Thorsten, made me shun more than death. And now that all is said, and that this burden is cast off from my heart—now I wonder that I should feel it to be so horrible; for, Lennartson, you cannot regard a youthful indiscretion so great—you cannot for some foolish letters condemn me, deprive me of your love!”

“Have you told me all, Flora, *all*?”

“I have told you *all*.”

“Farewell, Flora!” He offered her his hand, which she held fast, and exclaimed, with anxiety:

“Where?—in mercy, in pity for me, tell me where you are going—what you will do?”

“By one means or another to get these letters out of St. Orme’s hands, and place them again in yours.”

“Thorsten, you are my redeeming angel!” replied Flora, as she threw herself on her knees before him. Lennartson was gone already.

Selma came home—alone. Her mother spent the evening with Mrs. Rittersvärd. Selma was in part made acquainted with that which had occurred, and heard it with astonishment and disquiet; yet most of all she seemed surprised that Flora had not earlier opened her heart, and disclosed all that it contained to Lennartson. When she heard Lennartson’s last words, she was confounded, and exclaimed:

"By one means or another, Flora? And you have let him take this resolve! You hazard his life!"

"Merciful heaven! is that possible?" cried Flora; "I never thought of that. But no! St. Orme would not venture——"

"St. Orme will venture everything to obtain you. Lennartson to release you. St. Orme is known for a fortunate duellist; Lennartson shuns no danger, and I know that he regards duels in certain cases——Flora, Flora, what have you done?"

"And what would you that I should have done? Would you have had me sacrifice myself?" asked Flora, gloomily.

Selma wrung her hands in despair.

"Fortunately," continued Flora, "St. Orme is not in Stockholm, and——"

"Envoyé St. Orme is without, and desires to speak with Miss Flora," announced the Philosopher, now with an unearthly voice.

Flora turned pale. I fancy that we all turned pale.

"Go, Flora, go!" besought Selma, almost commandingly—"go and speak with him. Prevent their meeting—save, save Lennartson!"

Flora looked at Selma with a dark expression, and turning to me, said:

"Wilt thou go with me, Sophia? I will not again be alone with this man, but I will speak with him yet once more—I will attempt the utmost!"

I followed Flora. St. Orme stood in the large drawing-room. He looked calm and self-possessed, went up to Flora, and wished to take her hand. She avoided this proudly, and cast upon him an annihilating glance.

He observed her coldly, and then said: "I see how it is, and you also will soon see. Well, then, what do you say? But—could we not speak without witness?"

"No! because I will not be again alone with a man like you."

"Aha! that sounds severe. Well, then! You must complain of yourself, if anything comes out which you would rather have had concealed."

"You are a mean slanderer, Adrian St. Orme!"

“Flora Delphin, let us avoid injurious words—at least, till there be further occasion; now they serve no purpose. Let us now talk candidly and reasonably. Let us look at the affairs as they are in their nakedness and truth; for what is the use of kicking against necessity? You have no better friend than me, Flora, and I can prove that thus I have been true to you, spite of your whims. I have always behaved openly and honourably to you, even in telling you that you *must* be *mine*; that I would defy heaven and hell to prevent your becoming perjured. My love and my mode of thinking are of another kind to those of ordinary men; they take higher paths, and have higher aims. My will bows not either to weather or wind;—what I will that will I, and——”

“Spare your words, St. Orme,” interrupted Flora, impatiently. “I know you now, and I will no more be befooled with fine speeches. Tell me in short what you wish, and I will tell you what I have determined.”

“What I wish, that you know—my love and my wishes you know. Let me now rather say what you wish.”

“What do I wish?”

“Yes, what you wish at the bottom. What you must wish. Or, think you, that I do not know you? Do you think that I have allowed myself to be bewildered with these revolutions in your feelings, by this spectre of a new love which has seized upon your imagination? Child! Child! No one has reposed upon my breast whose innermost soul I have not penetrated, whose slightest pulsation I have not heard. And to yours have I listened with the ears of sympathy and love—Flora, you are deeply, deeply bound to me; not by your letters, your oaths, your love, which you have given to me—but by a mightier bond—by the depth of sympathy, by virtues, nay, even by failings; for even your failings are mine, and I know myself again in you. Fools command people to reform their errors. I have loved yours and adopted them, in order through them to make you happy. Look around you whether you can find such a love! And from this you will turn yourself, mistaking yourself and me! Do you think that your beauty, your talents, fettered me to you?—hundreds possess these in a higher degree than you! No! it is your deeper self; your sublime, eccentric being, wandering and wavering, between heaven and hell! Upon

the journey between these poles will I accompany you, you shall accompany me—sharing its perdition or its bliss! at this moment I offer you bliss! Confess yourself; you are no Northern maiden, Flora, and cannot be measured by the temperate life of the north. You are of a southern nature, and require for your bloom a warmer sun. Accompany me therefore to the East, to the magnificent Constantinople, and there—learn to know me rightly. For you know me not yet, Flora. It is a peculiarity of my nature not to open its depths except to a full devotedness—my love burns where it cannot bless,—and you, yourself Flora, shall dread me from that moment in which you turn yourself from me. I have used sharp weapons against you, I will use them until the moment in which you resign yourself captive! But then, too, will you become acquainted with a love stronger than the glow of the East, more beautiful than your own beautiful and burning fancy—trust me! You will recognise yourself again in the hour when you fully return to me—your first, your strongest love; you will find first the fulness of life in my arms. I know you better than you know yourself. For your own sake I conjure you turn yourself fully to me, throw yourself into these arms which are opened for you, come to this breast and find a heaven—no! *that* is feeble—a hell of bliss!”

And St. Orme fell upon his knees before Flora, and extended his arms to her.

She had during these words let her head sink upon her breast. When he had ended, she raised it, and standing up slowly, said with an agitated voice:

“What words! what expressions! I know them again—they wake strings which I thought were broken—but they resound still. Oh! that I could but believe you, and—But in vain!—In this hour, when I am bewitched by your words, I feel, I know that you will only deceive me, that you do not love me, that you merely play a part. Oh, St. Orme, how great would you be! how glorious would you be! if you were but *honest*! But you fail of this least and this greatest, and with it of all!”

St. Orme sprang up as if struck by an arrow, and a great change passed over him. The so-lately-extended arms were folded upon his breast, the colour paled on his cheek, and with an icy scorn he stepped before Flora, and said:

“ You can then in this case so much better extend your hand to me, for you cannot, indeed, my little Flora, gravely insist upon it that you are what the people call ‘ an honourable woman ! ’ ”

Flora felt this sting as keenly as St. Orme felt that which she gave. Flaming with anger, she exclaimed :

“ Yes, too honourable, too good am I in truth to belong to you, mean man ! And let happen what may, I never will become your wife ! ”

“ You shall be my wife or nobody’s ; and you shall go to the grave with a stained reputation. If you will have me for an enemy, I will treat you accordingly. ”

“ Do it ! I fear you not, miserable, coward-heart ! Thorsten Lennartson will speedily free me from your aspersions. I have seen you grow pale and tremble before him. You shall have experience of a strength which shall tame yours. ”

At this reminder, St. Orme’s pale cheeks coloured, and he said with a vengeful smile :

“ Thorsten Lennartson will desert you when I let him see certain letters, in particular *one* certain letter—my poor little Flora, you seem to have a short memory, and not at all to remember that letter in which you invited me——”

Flora now interrupted him with a torrent of words and expressions, with which I will not stain my paper. Their principal meaning was, that St. Orme made use of her good faith, of her indiscretion, to blacken her intentions and her conduct ; but it was not an innocent woman but a fury who spoke in Flora.

St. Orme heard her with coldness, and when she ceased speaking from exhaustion he said :

“ When you have composed yourself, you will see that all this will not serve you at all. You have in any case only one course to take, and that is, to go with me to Constantinople as my wife. You have made the way difficult for yourself, but it still stands open to you. Shall I show it to you ? ”

Flora made no reply, and St. Orme continued :

“ You write to-day to Lennartson and tell him, that on account of a prior engagement—which you had for a moment forgotten—you must renounce the honour of becoming his wife. You know best how you can turn it. And after that, confer your hand on your first, true love, and—he will con-

duct you as his dearly beloved wife to his beautiful villa near Constantinople."

"Know, St. Orme," interrupted Flora, "know, that if this took place—and something within me at this moment says that it will take place—then you lead misfortune into your house, your own Nemesis!" With this she stood up, pale, and with outstretched hand and with a fearful expression, she continued: "For I shall hate you, Adrian—I shall so hate you, that you yourself shall be terrified, and shall fear before—your own wife! Yes, laugh now! The time will come when you will not laugh, the time will come when I shall see you—take care of yourself, St. Orme, you have awoke in me a horrible thirst. You have given me a desire to be near you, to be your wife, merely to punish you, merely to be revenged on you. There—but, take off yourself!—there, take my hand, take it if you dare, take it, and—with it my eternal hate!"

"I take it and your hatred! It has amused me sometimes to compel indifference—now it gives me pleasure to force hate to change into love. In this respect I follow merely the doctrine of Christianity. Agreed, lovely bride! On Sunday they shall publish the banns for us three times in the church, and eight days afterwards we will celebrate the marriage. But I am charmed with you for the beautiful struggle and the quick resolution. That well deserves a bridegroom's kiss."

With this, he clasped her in his arms, and they kissed;—thus embrace each other the spirits of hell.

With a shudder, with a horrible "hu!" Flora recovered her consciousness. St. Orme had vanished.

In the same moment Selma stood in the doorway and beckoned me silently to her. I went to her, and she whispered quietly:

"Brenner is here! He wishes to meet with St. Orme, whom he understood to be here. In my anxiety I have told him somewhat of that which has occurred, and have mentioned to him the meeting which I feared between Lennartson and St. Orme. He seems to consider that he has the first right to fight with St. Orme. I have had a deal of trouble to keep him back till the conversation here was ended, and he can hear its result from you. Come now and speak to him; tell us how it is!"

And she led me to Brenner, who was in my stepmother's boudoir. I found him in the most violent temper, and so determined to fight with St. Orme, that it was only with difficulty that I could prevent his doing so, and by telling him what turn the affair had taken, as well as by confessing my uncertainty whether Flora deserved that such men as Brenner and Lennartson should venture life and blood for her. I besought him earnestly at least to keep himself quiet this one day, and await further intelligence. I promised to write to him early in the morning on this subject. With this promise Brenner left us, and I accompanied Selma to Flora.

She paced rapidly up and down the room, talked loud, and seemed not to regard us.

"That is glorious, that is right glorious!" exclaimed she; "all is now settled; all choice, all torment over! He has won the game. But do not rejoice, then! Thou hast closed *one* future to me, but thou hast opened to me another. I will—I have a new goal, a new interest in life; and that is, to rack thee, to torment, to punish thee!"

"Flora!" exclaimed Selma, with an indescribable expression of pain and tenderness.

"Yes," continued she, "he shall learn whom he has subjected! Ah, Adrian St. Orme! We shall see! we shall see! Long have I wavered between heaven and the abyss—the abyss has won. Well! I will go to school there; I will be skilful in its arts, more skilful than he. In such things a woman is always more skilful than a man."

"Flora! Flora!" cried Selma again.

"Who calls Flora?" exclaimed she, wildly. "Is it my good angel? then he may know that he calls on me too late. I will listen to him no more. I have now something else to do, and people may curse me or weep over me; it is all the same, and I shall not ask about it. All my feelings and all my thoughts are hatred and revenge. Ah, that I could properly revenge myself!"

She stood still awhile, as if she bethought herself, clapped her hands and exclaimed:

"I have it—I have it! He thinks of obtaining wealth with me, but he shall be mistaken. Married to him, I will become a spendthrift, a gambler; I will in every possible way

lavish away money—will accumulate debts—will weave around him a web of trouble and vexation!—Ha! shudder, St. Orme! How thou shalt be imposed upon! To have employed so much labour, so much craft, so much eloquence, to have brought into thy house poverty and hatred! Gold and hatred those thou mightst have embraced; but poverty and hatred, when they shall embrace thee! then perhaps we may see this iron brow grow pale, this bold glance become timid—then shalt thou wish to escape, but shalt not be able.”

In this manner and in this spirit continued Flora for a long time. Selma had vanished in the mean time. It had become dark; a wild storm raged without, and showers of hail and rain poured clatteringly down. The uproar in nature seemed to allay the uproar in Flora's soul. She became calmer. She stood long in the window, observing the contest without. In a while her tears began to flow. She wept long, and appeared to obtain ease from so doing.

When she had somewhat composed herself, she seated herself at her writing-desk, saying:

“Now I will write to Lennartson, and beseech of him to give up all thoughts of me. I shall tell him that I am unworthy of his devotion, his esteem. That is not true; but what matters it? In this way I shall preserve him from all danger, and—I am now quite indifferent towards myself.”

Deeply affected by these words, I exclaimed: “Wait yet a while, Flora. Let us think; let us consider; some outlet, some help must yet present itself.”

“No, there is none,” sighed Flora, with a kind of quiet desperation, “and I am tired of labouring, of struggling against an irresistible destiny. This St. Orme is my dark destiny; I must be his, that I feel. Oh this Lennartson! so strong and yet so good—he alone could have saved me. Yes, if he could have loved me as I loved him, beyond everything. But he could not thus love me. And yet I am not altogether unworthy of his love. I have something in me, which under his protection, by his side, might have developed itself to great beauty. Oh, Lennartson! had I been thine, how different had I, had everything been. That which thou hast loved should I have loved; and talents, wealth, all the gifts which I possess, and which now will be changed into a curse, would in thy hands have been changed into a blessing.

Oh, to stand near such a goal, and see it vanish ; to hold in one's hand life's best lot, and to see it snatched away ! To be compelled to renounce a Lennartson, to be the outcast and despairing prey of a St. Orme ! Oh, why do I not die ?”

And in a new outbreak of the most violent pain Flora threw herself upon the floor.

At this moment a bright ray of light broke through the clouds into the room, and it seemed to me as if a white dove descended in this brightness, and spread its wings over Flora.

It was Selma, who with the lightness of a bird flew into the room, sank on her knees beside Flora, and whilst she threw off a white shawl which covered her head and shoulders, stretched forth her hands and exclaimed :

“ No, live ; live, my Flora ! Live, and be happy. There are your letters !”

In her hand was a small bag of crimson silk.

With an exclamation of joy, “ My letters ! my letters !” Flora threw herself upon them.

“ You are free, Flora,” continued Selma, with a voice which seemed to repress the agitation of her mind. “ St. Orme resigns you——sets off soon from Stockholm——you are free——be happy, be happy !”

“ Selma, what do you say ?” exclaimed Flora ; “ are you, or am I insane ? How——what——how have you known ?”

With incoherent, zealous questionings both Flora and I surrounded Selma. But she answered nothing ; she heard us not. She lay without consciousness on the floor, her hair and her dress wet through with rain.

We carried her to her bed, but our efforts to recal her to consciousness were fruitless. I sent with all speed a messenger to my stepmother, and another also to our family physician, Doctor L. And quickly were both of them beside her bed ; my stepmother with a countenance as pale, almost as death-like, as that of her beloved daughter.

After a vein had been opened, Selma returned to life, but not to consciousness. She was, in a sorrowful manner, absent from herself.

The clear friendly eyes were wild and staring, and seemed as if they would avoid some horrible sight.

She drew me towards her, and said half whispering :

"Do you know, it was horrible! I met him just as I came out of——out of the pit; and he looked at me with such terrible, flaming eyes——"

"Who looked at you so, my sweet Selma?" asked I.

"He——St. Michael——you know. I wished to fly; but he held me back, and marked my forehead with his finger, because I had been with the bad one; and since then it burns within, and I know that I never more can show myself among people. They all look at me with such terrified looks——you also——I must look very horrible!"

"You are ill, Selma, and therefore everybody looks so anxiously at you; but you yourself look like a good angel, as you are."

"Yes, you say so; but he indeed knew better; he who saw me there——he would have killed me, would have run his spear into my heart, if I had not fled. Yes, I fled from him; but I felt that it was all over with me; that I was branded, and the whole world fled before me as I fled——"

"You must not talk so much now, Selma, you must try to sleep."

"Sleep?—No, I shall never sleep more. It burns so sadly here!" She laid her hand upon her forehead. "And I see everywhere the looks—the looks! They will keep me awake till doomsday. No, I can never more sleep!"

Whilst I listened to these horrible phantasies, and sought in vain after their cause, Doctor L. explained them to my stepmother by the words "*a brain-fever, a mild brain-fever.*" He said that this disease was very prevalent just now, and mostly made violent attacks without any ostensible cause. We immediately adopted all the remedies which he prescribed, and which are useful in the treatment of such diseases. Selma's head was raised high in bed, and the room was made dark and kept still, and cold applications were used for the burning head. As I was engaged with attending to all this, they came and called me out. In the ante-room I found Lennartson, but so pale, and so agitated, as I had never before seen him.

"Where, where is Selma?" asked he, hastily. "What had she to do with St. Orme? Who sent her there?"

"You do not suspect Selma of anything bad or incorrect?" asked I.

"Her? Impossible! But I suspect others. I fear that they misuse her self-sacrificing, affectionate heart."

"How and where did you meet with Selma?"

"I went to seek for St. Orme. A lady wrapped in a white shawl came at that moment out of his room. Some unmanly young fellows tried to unveil her; I released her from them, and then I saw that she trembled; took her hand, to lead her down, and then I recognised her as—Selma! She tore herself from me, and fled so hastily that I could not say a word to her—could not then accompany her—but now I must know why she was there?"

In as few words as possible, I related to the Baron all that had occurred.

We now saw that Selma, impelled by a sudden impulse to save Flora, and to prevent a meeting between St. Orme and Lennartson, had hastened to the dwelling of the first, defended alone by her enthusiasm and her devoted love. But by what talisman she has been able to induce St. Orme to give up the treasure which he has so long kept with the jealous grasp of the dragon, that is incomprehensible to us.

Deeply struck was Lennartson when he was made acquainted with Selma's present condition. As it was now very late in the evening, he was obliged to go. "I shall come again early in the morning," said he. He inquired also after Flora, but seemed scarcely to hear my answer. Oh! it is ever clearer to me which he loves.

The 20th, in the Morning.

Now is the night over, but what a night! Selma has constant delirium. The same phantasies return, although under various forms; and well did I now understand their ground. Oh, my poor young sister! Towards morning she desired to have myrtle and flowers, and began to weave a garland, which she called Flora's bridal wreath; for some time she kept up zealously, but at times her feeble hands dropped down, and would not complete the work. She sang also scraps of her joyous songs, but she ended none. My poor stepmother went about with speechless anxiety in her eyes, and seemed to ask with them, "How is it? How will it be?" Flora is gone this morning to her sister, after having sate up with me through the night. I have now written to

Brenner, and shall not again leave my Selma's chamber, where I write this.

In the Evening.

All remains the same. Selma continues to weave her garland, but laments that it never will be ready; in the intervals she sings. Doctor L. looks troubled, and talks of cutting off her hair—her beautiful hair!

Lennartson has been here several times to inquire after her. They laid in the night straw before the house, to deaden the sound of the wheels. That was Lennartson's attention.

Brenner also has been here, but I did not see him.

The 21st.

Another night of inexpressible disquiet and anguish! Doctor L. does not think that she can live through the day, if a happy crisis do not take place.

In Sweden, they call certain nights at Midsummer *iron nights*, in which a frost spirit appears and breathes over the flower-strewn earth. Often then is killed and destroyed in a few hours the hopes of years. Then is the heaven clear, the air calm; and when the sun ascends, the corn-fields shine with the finest silver attire—but it is the *attire of death*; an icy garment, under whose covering the blooming ears are destroyed.

In human life, too, occur at times these *iron nights*. Then die the young, the gay, the blooming; happy souls, if they die not only in heart, if they escape being left alone on the earth like the empty ears of the field, without sap and without the power of life. Selma! thou young, thou good one! I can scarcely wish that thou shouldst live—for ever plainer hear I out of thy wanderings the secret of thy heart, thy silent sufferings. But if thou goest home, how desolate——

Later.

Some change seems to be taking place in Selma; she raves still, but her phantasies assume a more quiet character. She believes now that she shall die, and has called to me several times only to say, "When I am dead, remain in my place with my mother! Love her! She is so good!"

Flora was here only for a moment; she cannot bear to see and hear Selma; and is for the most part with her sister.

In the Evening.

Oh, now one hour of hope! May it not deceive us!

In the afternoon, Selma called to me and said:

"Now I am dead, Sophia! You see plainly that I lie in my grave; and it is good to be there too, if I only find rest, if I only can sleep. Used they to sleep in graves? To sleep and forget—till they awoke with God. I wonder why I cannot sleep like the rest!—ah yes, I know, I know—it is *his* glance! Have you seen him?"

"Seen whom, my sweet Selma?"

"St. Michael! It is his flaming glance which burnt me, which keeps me awake in the grave. But I know likewise, that when I can once see him in the light, above the clouds, then will he regard me quite otherwise. I know that all here which is bad, happens only because it is so dark upon earth; that one cannot see all as it is in its truth."

A sudden thought with this occurred to me, and whilst I endeavoured to chime in with her ideas, I said that I had seen him of whom she spoke; he had no suspicion of her, but would gladly look in light and love upon her.

"If I could believe that," said Selma, with a look of melancholy joy, "then I should be easier. If he will let a look of blessing fall upon my grave, then it would press through the earth, and down into my coffin, and the torments would then cease, and I should be able to slumber in peace. But tell nobody in the world," continued she vehemently—"tell nobody that I have loved him. Say to everybody, 'She has loved no one, excepting her father, her mother, her friend Flora, and her sister Sophia.' And do not tell Flora that Selma died for her!—Tell her that I was stung by a snake, and of that I became ill, mortally ill."

Whilst Selma talked thus with loud ringing voice, and fever burning upon her cheeks, a light movement took place in the chamber; and as I looked in its direction, I perceived Lennartson and Flora standing behind Selma's bed's-head. They seemed to have heard all; he held his hands pressed against his breast, and seemed to breathe with difficulty. According to the prescription of the physician, Selma was raised high in the bed, in a half-sitting posture, her beautiful hair falling down in waves; over her head she had thrown the half-finished garland, which she had bound for Flora; it was

the beloved prey which the dark ravager approached to embrace ; it was the sylph, who had lost her wings, but now stiffening in death, could not lose her beauty.

Dark fancies seemed again to ascend in her.

"No, no !" exclaimed she, with supplicating outstretched hands, "thrust me not down into this dark depth ! I desire nothing base ! Help, Lennartson !"

And in the same moment Lennartson stood before her, clasped her extended hands between his, and said with an indescribable expression of love :

"What fears Selma ? Lennartson is here. In life and in death will he defend thee ! Look at me, Selma, and trust in me !"

She looked at him at first with a timid, astonished glance ; but this soon changed itself through the powers which proceeded from Lennartson's glorious beaming eyes. He seated himself on the edge of her bed, and continued to look at her quietly and steadfastly ; and, wonderful ! during this gaze, the excitement passed away from hers, and the loving and clear expression returned. She spoke no word, but it was as if her being's hitherto unexpressed, fettered harmony now poured itself forth in silent streams, and united them and made them happy. Over the countenance of the poor invalid the expression of unspeakable peace diffused itself more and more, the weary eyelids sank, and she softly slept. Long sate Lennartson still, with his gaze fixed upon the slumberous countenance ; but my stepmother's mute signs compelled him at length to retire. She silently extended her arms to him ; he clasped her in his, leaned upon her shoulder, and deep sighs laboured forth from his breast.

Flora had vanished, but none of us had observed when she went.

All is still ; so still in the house ; they know that the beloved daughter of the house sleeps an important sleep. The Philosopher looks gloomy in the highest degree. He said to me yesterday in his unearthly voice, "If Miss Selma dies, then it is not worth while to live." Then is the sunshine gone from the world.

The 22nd.

The house will not lose its joyful sunshine. The crisis is ours, and Selma is out of danger ! We thank God ; we con-

gratulate one another; and yet, and yet, we cannot entirely rejoice. Life, which again opens itself for Selma, does not appear joyous. Lately, whilst Selma yet slept, I found my stepmother with an open letter in her hand, and with an expression of deep dejection in her countenance. It seemed to me that she had suddenly become several years older.

"She sleeps yet!" said I with animation; "I think that she breathes easier and freer."

"May that be as God pleases!" replied my stepmother, quietly, and almost spiritless; "I dare scarcely wish to keep her. There is so much which hereafter may make life dark to her—that I see now. Flora will marry the man whom of all others is most suitable for my Selma, and the only one whom she has loved, whom I have seriously wished to call my son. St. Orme is gone, and has sent me a letter, which confirms all that I have dreaded for some time. He has the whole winter long borrowed from me, now large sums of money, and now small, which he always promised to repay, and never has repaid, and which I have been good-natured enough, or rather weak enough, to lend upon his bare word, without any written obligation. And now he is gone, and writes merely short and negligent, that 'he will on the first possibility repay me, and so on.' But I know what that means; he will never repay me, and I, who lent to him far beyond my means, and therefore have been myself obliged to borrow from others, am drawn into infinite trouble! I have not deserved it from St. Orme! But this would not make me so uneasy if it only concerned myself. But it is bitter to me that my good lovely girl will be obliged to live in want and self-denial. No! in that case she had better go to our Lord, if such be His will;—to be sure then I should be very solitary, very forlorn in my old days." Large tears rolled down the pale cheeks of my stepmother, and she wiped them quietly away with the corner of her silk shawl. This rent my very heart, and at the feet of my stepmother I conjured her to consider all that which I possessed as her own, and to let me have a daughter's right in her heart; I would, if Selma died, never leave her.

She thanked, she embraced me, but seemed to find little consolation in that which I offered her. Selma's re-awaking to life made all trouble for a moment retreat, and joy alone

bear sway, but the bird of night soon showed itself again. The Philosopher looks happy, and casts such bright glances at me that I cannot help answering them kindly.

The 24th.

The Viking also, the honest, warm-hearted Wilhelm Brenner also, is deceived and almost ruined by St. Orme.

And his children! My heart bleeds for him, and feels it hard that he no longer comes here. Lennartson has been here every day, happy in the happy change in Selma's illness, but he has not desired to see her. He is now deeply troubled about Brenner's misfortunes, which he, however, bears with manly fortitude. Lennartson has in a brotherly manner offered him his assistance. But Brenner has refused it; he is certain that in a few years' time he shall be able to help himself. "But this I say to thee, brother," continued he, with melancholy cheerfulness, to Lennartson, "that if our Lord calls me to His army above, before I here have gained firm footing and position on earth for me and mine, I then shall leave thee a legacy."

"Oh! what?" asked he.

"My children!"

A silent shake of the hands followed; thus do noble minds understand each other.

But these words have made me weep. For to me the Viking gives nothing in his will. He does not love me sufficiently for that.

In the middle of May he sails to the Mediterranean.

The 26th.

Deeply affected by the state and the depressed appearance of my stepmother, I asked her to-day why she did not confide her affairs to her half-brother. He would certainly be able as well to counsel as to assist her. But with a kind of horror she repelled this. "No! no!" exclaimed she, "it would not do! It would serve no purpose." I was astonished; I thought that it would have helped greatly; never could the Chamberlain find a better opportunity than now, of gratifying his so often-talked-about passion for doing good in silence. "Yes, I know what he would say," said my stepmother, sighing; still very much troubled about a considerable sum

which she should have to pay in a few days, she resolved at length in the evening to send to her brother. He came, and seemed considerably embarrassed about that which was confided to him. At last he counselled his sister to give up her establishment, and make herself a *bankrupt*! This would be the best mode of saving herself. With an indignation, and a high-mindedness, which won for her my entire love, my stepmother rejected this proposal; "rather would she live on bread and water, and try the uttermost, than that anybody should suffer by her." The Chamberlain declared that "this mode of thinking was very beautiful, very respectable; but besought her to make use of her reason, and so on." My stepmother would hear nothing of that; her brother had no other advice to give, and cast a glance at me, after which he hastily went jesting about my "Jupiter-mien," and pretending some important business. My warm heartfelt approbation of my stepmother's mode of thinking and acting seemed to console and cheer her.

The 29th.

A lovely, warm day, which Selma's convalescence made the more beautiful to us. The quiet seriousness which now pervades her being, prevents her not from receiving with thankful joy every little gift which life and friendship offer to her. My stepmother endeavours to conceal her secret disquiet and her trouble, but is often near betraying them. At my request she has now confided them to Lennartson, who seems to be selected to be everybody's helper.

How matters now stand between Lennartson and Flora I cannot rightly understand. Yesterday I found them together in the drawing-room, he with his arm around her waist, she with her hand leaning on his shoulder;—before them, upon the table, lay the crimson little bag, the object of so much torment and confusion. Serious and tender words seemed to have been spoke by Lennartson; Flora was deeply excited; but it seemed to me that neither of them were happy. Flora has been here and with Selma, but only for a short time, and continues to be a riddle to me. She has just now written me a few words, the meaning of which is, that since she was easy with regard to Selma's health, she would accompany her sister on a pleasure journey to Svartsjö, to hear the nightingales sing; but that on the 3rd of May she should again be here.

Flora journeys and amuses herself, and leaves the friend who has sacrificed all for her to her silent pain. Her brother also, at this moment, might have some claim upon her care and companionship; his health is very uncertain, and he has been ordered in the spring to travel abroad, and to make use of one of the warm baths of Germany. But amid all the troubles which her connexions suffer, Flora thinks only of amusing herself and listening to the songs of the nightingales. What deep egotism! But I will not condemn her yet. Perhaps she goes to the quiet parks of Svartsjö to listen there in peace to the inner voice.

The 30th.

To-day Selma was so well, that I could desire from her some account of her meeting with St. Orme, and by what magic art she obtained from him in a moment the weapons which he had so long held, and nullified the victory which he had just won. The little which Selma told me on this subject, and which I could not wish to pursue further, from the dread that she might thereby be too much excited, has enabled me, on consideration of every circumstance, to form into the following picture:

At the moment when Flora seemed sunk in a bottomless pit without redemption, Selma felt herself animated by a courage and a wish to save her, which were powerful enough to defy everything. The fear of coming too late to prevent the meeting between Lennartson and St. Orme, the feeling of a danger which pressed on many sides, made her almost unconsciously follow upon his steps. She scarcely herself knew what she was about when she found herself at St. Orme's door; and the singular reception which she had from him can only be explained by an extraordinary state of mind in himself.

St. Orme had left the bride whom he had fettered with power and craft, had left her with apparent coldness and exultation of victory. But no man remains cold before the frenzy of a woman who has once had a place in his heart. Nor was St. Orme calm when he left Flora. The tempest of that hour shook its wings, foreboding misfortune over him, and through the power of contrast awoke perhaps at this moment the remembrance of a very different kind. It was exactly this very day when St. Orme, so many years ago,

led to the altar the lovely and noble Virginia Adelan, his only noble, his only pure love.

And now they stood there beside each other—the two different points of time—the two dissimilar brides. In fancy came to him Virginia's bashful kiss on this day; he felt now that which, like the flame of hatred, lay burning from Flora's lips; and his mind turned itself from her, and was irresistibly drawn to the lovely young wife that once was his. He thought on her beautiful love, how this still was his in her hour of death; perhaps he remembered, also, how he then in mysticising sorrow had besought her forgiveness, and had prayed her to reveal herself to him after death, and how she had promised it. Perhaps St. Orme wished to remove these thoughts, and to call up others from the Opera-foyers and Parisian boudoirs,—but between these glittering, dazzling scenes, rose up again and again the image of his pale young wife, as he had seen her in her white robe of death, and a horrible feeling—like a wind from death, from the grave—crept through St. Orme's breast.

He sate silently in his room, depressed and full of thought, looking darkly forth into the gathering of twilight, when the door slowly opened, and a female figure, clothed in white from head to foot, presented itself before him.

St. Orme started up, but staggered and sunk backward on the sofa, hoarsely stammering forth:

"Virginia!"

"Virginia speaks to thee through me," replied the sweet voice of Selma. "St. Orme, hear us!" And now words flowed from her lips, which she herself cannot remember, and with which a higher power seemed to inspire her. The excitement of the moment had opened St. Orme's heart; the recollection of Virginia, the prayer in her name, the interest which he always had towards Selma, the singularity of her act, the deep earnestness which lay in her representations, the speaking of life and death from such young, lovely lips—all this made his mind waver, and inclined him to listen to Selma's prayer for the liberation of Flora. Selma saw him waver, but thought also that she saw the moment when he would cease to do so, when he would harden himself against her prayers—and suddenly she dropped the tone of beseeching, to show to him, in an almost threatening tone, the cer-

tain consequences to himself if he persisted in his proposal ; she told him Flora's words, and determination for the future ; she showed to him Lennartson, Brenner, and even Felix, who were ready with arms in their hands to assert Flora's freedom ; she showed to him danger, death, and ruin in every way, like the furies who would stand in his path, and St. Orme—shuddered.

It is the established rule in modern romance literature to represent bad people or *villains* in an especial manner as strong and powerful men. But in real life we see it otherwise. Then we see that it is, above all, the upright, the noble man who is strong and mighty—who with his will and his faith stands firm to death. The base, the mean mind may for a time appear strong and insolent ; but in the hour of certain danger, a sudden outbreak of irresolution or cowardice proves that he bears a terrified heart in his breast, that he knows he stands upon trembling ground.

What passed at this moment in St. Orme's breast I cannot say, nor yet decide which part of Selma's words exercised the greatest power over him ; but certain is it that he now felt the necessity of submitting to her demands ; and looking gloomily before him, and murmuring the words of the unfortunate Philip Egalité upon the guillotine, " One hell is as good as another !" went to his writing-desk, and took thence the crimson bag containing Flora's letters. He gave them to Selma, with these words :

" You are the sister of my Virginia, Selma ; and for your sake I will voluntarily abstain from that, from which no other power should make me abstain. Tell Flora that she is free—my presence here shall not long oppress her ; I shall set off the day after to-morrow. You can go now ; you have obtained your object, and may be glad."

Selma wished to thank him ; but he interrupted her with severity, almost with rudeness, and prayed her to spare him her sentimental talk, and to go her way.

Selma moved away afraid, but still at the door she turned herself, with these words :

" Oh, St. Orme ! though you do say so, yet I will bless you !" She heard St. Orme whistling, and hastened down the stairs ; here she met—what I have already indicated, and which was too much for so fine feeling and pure a nature to bear.

After Selma had told me what I wished to know, she besought me with deeply crimsoning blushes to tell her Lennartson's behaviour to her during her illness, of which she had only a dark comprehension. I told her all; and an unspeakably inward gladness shone hereupon in her eyes, and expressed itself in grateful tears. She felt herself beloved by *him*—she knew that she stood bright and pure before his glance. That was bliss enough for her.

The 1st of May, forenoon.

The Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce! And so stuffed out with gossip, that it stood up to the throat and out at the mouth. The report of Flora's marriage, not with St. Orme, but with Lennartson, was the chief subject; the great ball which was to be given the day after to-morrow at the castle, was the next; the walks in the parks in the afternoons and the beautiful new equipages, which were then to be seen, was the third; and the fourth was Brenner's loss of all his accumulated property, together with his voyage to the Mediterranean, and his long absence. They knew precisely how it would go on with his domestic affairs during his absence, and had many anxieties on the subject. The oldest boy ought to go to the orphan-school; and to look after and care for the other children, Brenner had taken into his house one Mrs. Trollman, a "decent" person enough, but a right coffee-bibber, who made coffee day and night, and was the veriest gossip in the world. And with regard to housekeeping, one could very well imagine how that would go, when we know that during the late Trollman's life they had never baked at home, but had had all their bread from a bakehouse, and yet they had four children and two maid-servants in the house!! One could think how it would be. It would be a foolish business. It really was incomprehensible how Captain Brenner could take such a person into his house; but she had hung herself in fact upon him, by being, while the children were ill, so obliging as a neighbour, and so good to them.

"Have the children been ill?" exclaimed I.

"Yes; they have had the scarlet fever, poor little things; and the two youngest are even now very ill, especially the lame boy. Now, it would be well if our Lord took him."

"The poor father!" sighed I.

"Yes, poor fellow!" repeated Miss P., "and that he is now obliged to set off from his home in this misery. And then he looks too as if he had not been *once* but *twice* buried!"

"But tell me now, in confidence, my sweet young lady," whispered the married sister confidentially, "when will the great, the extraordinary betrothal here be made known?"

I declared my perfect ignorance respecting it.

"The sooner," continued she, "the better will it be for Flora, to silence all gossiping tongues, that declare that perhaps things do not hang together. There was at one time a strange report in circulation. And people seem so little satisfied—inquisitive people—and who thought that I ought to know a little of what went on here in the house where I am so intimate, and where I, as I said, loved every chair; yes, people actually reproach me because I am not better informed—but I have, unfortunately, so little curiosity in me! But as regards this affair, I must confess that I willingly would know a little more for Flora's and my good friend Mrs. Adelan's sake."

If the lady was unfortunately so little curious, I also was as little communicative; and to say the truth, that which I had heard of Brenner made me incapable of hearing or talking of other things.

I wonder whether Brenner will see me before his journey.

The 3rd of May.

To-day Selma, for the first time, was able to enjoy the animating air of spring, which breathed softly through the open window into my stepmother's boudoir.

A lark soared jubilantly over the river up into the high blue air; white sails glided slowly hither from the Riddarfjärd, and the mountains and the shores clothed themselves in green. Selma saw all this and smiled, with tears in her beaming eyes. "How lovely this is!" said she; "how good and beautiful is life!"

She extended her hands to my stepmother and me, who sate on either side of her, and looking observantly upon us, she continued, softly smiling, "Why so grave?—why so solemn, as if the conversation were about my funeral. Now I am well; now it is spring; now we shall be happy!"

My stepmother rose up hastily, and wished to go, that she might conceal her emotion; but Selma held her back by her dress, and exclaimed whilst she wound her arms round her: "No, mamma, dear! do not go! Now we can speak openly; now I can hear all; now I must know what it is which makes those who are dear to me look so anxious. And perhaps it is nothing unexpected by me; perhaps I forebode already what it is. Tell me—tell me plainly at once, has St. Orme deceived us? Are our affairs in a bad condition; in one word—are we poor?"

"Yes, we are poor, my sweet child!" said my stepmother, now sobbing aloud; and bending over the head of her daughter, whose hair and brow were wet with her tears—she could say no more.

"But we are not poor in love," returned Selma. "Then it is not so dangerous; I have my mother and my mother has me, and we both have Sophia—we are still rich!"

"And we have also Lennartson," said I; and added some words on the manner in which he had behaved in the affair.

"It is so like him," said Selma, with deep, almost quiet emotion.

When we had become calmer, we talked quietly and cheerfully of our condition. Selma was one of those who makes all things easy, and proved to her mother, that by the sale of all her ornaments and her own beautiful collection of pictures all debts could be paid, and something remain also over. Selma had evidently a clearer idea of the condition of the family than her mother. "And," continued she with cheerful courage, "after we have made all things straight here in Stockholm, we will retire to some pretty country town, and settle down there and live economically. And I also will do something for food and clothing, and not merely, as hitherto, live like the lilies of the field. I will teach people desirous of learning, some of my many accomplishments, or translate books, or write books myself. Who knows what inspirations may come? And Sophia shall be my reviewer. Oh! we shall do great things!"

"Oh! if the sylph will only dance before us as hitherto," said I, "then I fear nothing in the world."

My stepmother wept no longer. Consolated and cheered, she embraced her daughters, and thanked God for them.

The Philosopher announced "Baron Lennartson."

Selma turned pale, and arose evidently trembling. I asked if she would go into her chamber and rest for a moment.

"No," replied she, "I feel myself strong enough to see him. Besides, my mother and my Sophia are with me."

Lennartson went up to Selma with an exclamation of joyful surprise as he saw her. She offered to him her hand, which he seized with animation, but both were so much excited, as to be unable to say anything for some time. Selma first broke silence, as she said with a tolerably firm voice :

"We have all of us so much, so infinitely much, to thank you for. How good you are, to stand by us even in this trouble!"

We now came to Selma's help, and related to Lennartson that of which we had just been speaking. Lennartson seemed pleased to be able to speak openly with Selma of the condition of affairs, and showed to her a statement which he had drawn up on paper; and by which it appeared, that things were much better than they at first had supposed.

When Selma cheerfully spoke of selling her own pictures, Lennartson seemed affected, for he knew well how dear and precious they were to her, even for his sake who had collected and given them to her, her beloved father; but he confessed that by this sale the affairs of the family would be most safely and most speedily rectified, and said he knew a safe purchaser. (I am much deceived if this purchaser be not—the Baron himself.)

For the rest, he besought my stepmother and Selma to be calm, and to leave all in his hands, he would endeavour to arrange all for the best.

As he was about to go, it seemed to him difficult. He held Selma's hand at parting long in his, and seemed to wish to say something, but his eyes only spoke a silent and expressive language; at length he pressed her hand reverentially to his lips, bowed himself deeply before her, and went.

And Selma! she stood there so quiet; so beautiful in her womanly nobility, happy in the midst of her misfortune, to feel her own worth and to see it acknowledged by such a man, and this raised her at this moment above all embarrassment, above all pain. Neither did she droop her eyes before

his warm, eloquent glance, but met it in clearness and inwardness. She was not ashamed to let him look down into the depth of her soul, she knew that he was great enough to see the feelings that lived therein for him, without misunderstanding her, without moving out of his way. They stood there, full of heavenly confidence in each other.

But the scenes of this afternoon had, however, been too much for Selma's yet weak bodily strength. When Lennartson was gone, her outward fortitude was gone too, and she sank almost fainting into my arms. Perhaps she recognised, as I did, in Lennartson's silent adieu, something of a particular meaning; perhaps it is true, as reports have circulated, that he this evening at the Castle will make his appearance as Flora's betrothed, and receive the congratulations of royalty, and of the whole world. Selma asked me as she went to bed, if I knew anything of Flora.

I replied that I had heard that she had returned on that day from her Svartsjö expedition, and would with her sister be present at the Castle. I could not help adding a few grave words of blame respecting Flora.

"Oh!" sighed Selma, "truly it is strange, and I do not understand her; but all will some day be clear, and Flora also. I have loved her so much!" And with this Selma began to weep bitterly.

I left my stepmother, who read aloud to Selma by the evening lamp, and went up to my room, longing to be left alone with my own thoughts. And now here sit I alone with them, and have written down the foregoing, amid the dull rattle of carriages which roll upwards from the North-bridge to the Castle. Now it is midnight, and all has become still in the streets. From the Castle windows, towards the Lion Hill, shine orange-coloured lights through the dusky May night; there lie the great state-rooms; and when I think on the different scenes *there* and *here*—when I think of Flora, glittering in joy and beauty, saluted and honoured as the bride of Lennartson, whilst she forgets her nearest connexions in their trouble, leaves her friend and her preserver to a life full of renunciation—then my heart is embittered towards her, and I feel that the hatred at which we played for a time becomes more earnest. If she at this moment stood before me, she should hear words

which would cover her brow with shame, which would make her shudder before herself, and—sooner or later, she shall hear them!

The 4th.

I was interrupted on the foregoing night by the stopping of a carriage before our door, and by a gentle movement which occurred in the house; immediately afterwards I heard soft footsteps upon the little stairs which led to Flora's and my chamber.

The bells now rang one o'clock at night. I went out into the corridor with a light in my hand to see what night wanderer it might be, and, in amazement, I saw standing there before me—Flora! Flora in her brilliant ball-dress, with a white garland of roses on her head; but for all that so pale, so changed, that she rather looked as if she had come out of a funeral vault than from a splendid festival.

"Can I speak with you?" said she, with a voice that I also thought changed; "but put out the light, I pray you! It blinds me—I have lately seen too much light!"

I did as Flora desired, and conducted her into my room, where she threw herself into an arm chair. We both were silent. I remembered not a word of my condemnatory sermon.

"Is it not true, Sophia," began Flora at length, "that lately, and especially to-night, you hate me in good earnest?"

"Yes, it is true!" I replied.

"I do not wonder at it," continued Flora, "but you have not had entire right to do so; and before long, perhaps, you will—hate me no longer. You have been more than once kind to me, Sophia, and therefore I desire now—after the manner of the world—that you should be still kinder towards me, and listen to me with patience. But I am not entirely and altogether selfish. I know how bad it is to cherish bitter feelings, and I will therefore endeavour to extinguish those with which I have inspired you, if it be possible before—But I must not anticipate!"

"You have found me to be a strange and incomprehensible being, and I shall give you the key thereto.

"You have sometimes talked to us of *primeval words*, and the primeval word of my unclear being is buried deep in my childhood and youthful home, in the influences which sur-

rounded my cradle, which accompanied my soul to its twentieth year. My mother was a good-natured, but weak and vain woman, my father a stern and haughty man, who despised all women, perhaps because he had found none near him whom he could rightly esteem. Contention ruled in our home, in one thing only were the parents agreed; to educate their children only for show, only to glitter and make their fortune in the polite world. In my soul early contended vanity and love of power, with noble impulses, but these were soon compelled to give way before the first; the heart which was capable of throbbing for a noble love, was compelled to throb for trifling and unworthy desires, and all the talents which might have conduced to greater and better purposes were speedily made subservient to vanity. O lot and fate of woman! Already in childhood was my soul poisoned by praise, flattery, and gifts, when I had been successful in company, or had drawn on myself observation and admiration. This continued through the whole of my youth; and to make a great marriage, to obtain a brilliant position in life, was held up to me as the one object of my existence. I lived more and more for this purpose, and sought merely to feed my immeasurable vanity. My natural gifts favoured me, and for a long time I conquered wherever I wished it; but I superciliously refused the easy conquest; refused soon to gratify the projects of my parents, and lived merely for pleasure. It only flattered my self-love, that I in this way made a few honest men unhappy. I myself remained cold. Then I met with St. Orme. You know how his reputation, his talents, his person, enchanted me. For the first time I became acquainted with love, and his homage flattered my self-love. His principles completed the annihilation of the good which still was in me; he imposed upon me by a certain superiority in will and thought, and had, for a time, an extraordinary power over me. But that was of a demoniacal nature, and had no proper root in my heart, in any part of my better self. When I saw myself forsaken by him, my pride and my worldly love helped me to forget him. New impressions assisted this. Selma, with whom I at this time came into a nearer connexion, had a living and beneficial influence upon me. I attached myself to her, so far as my selfish heart permitted it, and many better feelings were

awakened in my breast by her warm friendship, by her beautiful and pure soul.

“ My father died, and had named in his will Lennartson as my guardian, perhaps in the thought that he might soon become something more. It was a marriage in every way flattering to my vanity and my ambition, and there needed not the hints of my mother to make me attempt his conquest. I regarded this as easy ; but deceived myself, and the better I knew Lennartson, I saw only in his soul, in his activity, in his efforts, that which was great, before which all that I had before loved or striven after appeared to me pitiful and dwarf-like. Add to this, he was so amiable, so agreeable, even when he blamed me, that my heart soon was deeply interested, and he became the object of my life. I saw all too well that I had made an impression upon him ; and although he maintained towards me his full independence, and seemed not to permit himself to be enchanted by me, still I did not doubt but that in the end I should succeed under some of the forms or hues which, like aameleon, I had accustomed myself to assume, in order to please dissimilar natures and tempers. But the forms which I assumed were as if without soul ; and as the sunbeams dissipate the ignis-fatui of night, so did Lennartson’s glance penetrate and nullify all these false shapes. This character became ever more powerful, ever more conquering, ever more destructive to my self-love, ever more dangerous for my soul’s peace. And never did I feel his power, and my misery deeper, than in the moment when I knew that he saw through me and despised me. Despised by the man I loved, and felt that it was with justice——unspeakable anguish !”

Flora sprang up suddenly, and threw up the window towards the river, pushed back her curls, and seemed to inhale with delight the cool fresh night air. And the spectacle that was spread out before her sight was well calculated to calm, to elevate, an excited mind. Crystal-clear and still reposed the May-night over the city. The dark body of the Castle, with its lights glimmering from within, rested itself in quiet majesty amid the dark blue heaven ; below, lay in its dark shadow, the island of the Holy Ghost (Helgeandsholm), with its strange, bloody remembrances, and silver-clear lay the water of the Mälar with its shore, and spread

out in the distance its calm mirror, over which light mists reposed. The pennons on the vessels in the harbour hung quietly; all seemed to sleep, and the peace of night brought to mind the passing of the day's strife.

After a moment Flora continued, more calmly: "I remember it as well as if it had occurred to-day. Out of old habit, and also with the desire of awakening jealousy in Lennartson, I had coquetted with a man who had a fancy for me, but to whom I was quite indifferent; I misled him to follies, and laughed at him afterwards in Lennartson's presence. On that Lennartson broke through the forbearance which he had hitherto showed towards me, and talked severely to me, unveiled me before myself, and showed me in what a dangerous and desperate path I stood. Such serious words had never been spoken to me before, never had any one shown to me so little forbearance. My first movement was one of pride and anger; I would cast the audacious one for ever from me; my next was to write to him, to 'open to him my whole heart, and let him see the feelings which he had infused into me.' I was so accustomed to conquest, that I expected immediately to see Lennartson at my feet. He came, but—as a brother, mild but serious, and only by a certain embarrassment in his manner could I see that he well understood, but that he *would* not understand me. Ah! I was not the woman whom he could love, not the one whom he would choose for his life's companion!

"When I saw that, my pride arose and bade me conquer my love; this again bade me conquer my evil propensities, and become worthy of him. The kindness and the interest which he showed to me, the pleasure which he had in my talents, fettered me all the more closely to him, and gave me the desire to change myself to that ideal of beautiful womanhood which at all times seemed to float before Lennartson's soul. But ah! when one is artificially educated, there is nothing more difficult than to form oneself to a true and simple being. The most ravelled skein is more easy to rectify than an entangled and corrupted soul. And *they* alone can understand me, who, whilst they are labouring to raise themselves and to attain a higher stand, feel themselves perpetually as it were cast backward by a base demon into the deep pit from which they would mount, who have experienced the torment of feeling themselves below themselves.

“At this time my mother fell into a suffering illness which only ended in her death. I watched her with tenderness, and that which all my arts and my talents could not accomplish was effected by this simple thing. When Lennartson saw me fulfil my filial duties he was drawn nearer to me; I regained his esteem, and his heart seemed to respond to my feelings for him. By the death-bed of my mother he pressed the fatherless and motherless to his breast, and bade me lay my hand in his, and we exchanged holy vows.

“What now followed you know; Lennartson was called away to his father, and travelled with him into foreign lands; a will made me rich, and St. Orme came back and let me feel the snares in which I had entangled myself. I loved Lennartson now, and with him had new life awoke within me; but he was away when St. Orme returned, and he acquired somewhat of his former power, of his injurious influence over me. His bold will and power imposed upon me again, and he flattered and excited again my not yet eradicated inclination for pleasure, and for the conquests of vanity. When Lennartson returned he regained his power, and St. Orme’s star paled; but I was no longer free to tear myself from him; I was in his power, and my prayers and my threats were alike impotent. Then arose hatred and frenzy in my heart, and all the more as I was convinced that was it not *me* but my property which he loved. But you know all this, know my struggles, know how the victory was won at the moment in which all appeared to be lost, and I will not repeat it; but know you also Sophia to what degree the victory at this moment is mine?”

“What would you say?”

“I would say at this moment nothing prevents me from being Lennartson’s wife. He has offered me his hand, overcoming in magnanimity that which should have divided us; he knows all, and forgives all for my love’s sake. The cup of happiness is filled to the brim, and offered to me by the hand of fortune and of mercy; now for me remains merely one thing——”

“And that is?”

“To put it back, to renounce it!”

“How?”

“Ah! at the moment when I heard Selma upon the bed

of suffering, where she lay for my sake, utter in the delirium of fever the long-buried secret of her heart; as I saw Lennartson's feeling for her, saw their glances melt into one, then awoke in me the thought to offer myself, and to be the only unhappy one. But I was too little accustomed to indulge noble thoughts, and I struggled against them, and tried to persuade myself that Lennartson still loved me at the bottom, and that I could soon regain the love which I had lost through my conduct. I wished to show myself noble, upright; I laid in Lennartson's hands the letters which have made me so unhappy, and prayed him to judge me. I was sure of this, that he would not accept them; I did not deceive myself; he pushed them away from him, but took my hands in his and let me swear, solemnly swear, that there was nothing in these letters which prevented me from becoming the *wife of an honourable man*. Such were his words, and I swore. Thank God! I could do so. Thereupon he drew me to him, and spoke words of angelic goodness and nobility; but confessed that his heart was mine no longer, and acknowledged another love—I knew well to whom, although her name was not mentioned. He asked me whether I would have patience with him, and assist his endeavours to overcome this inclination, that he might fulfil his engagement with me. He would therefore for a time go into voluntary exile till he again could feel himself free, and could offer me a heart more worthy of me than now, and in a condition to make me as happy as it was his wish and his intention to do. 'We have both of us,' concluded he, 'erred in our paths, but the right way stands open to us still; let us take it. I will soon leave Sweden; but you shall write to me in my absence, and I will write to you, and thus we shall become dearer to each other, and become nearer to each other. We separate now only for a time, that we may be more inwardly united. We will not, my Flora, unite ourselves in *untruth*, but in *truth*; therefore have I also laid my soul open before you, as I wish that it always should be to her whom I hope to call my wife. I see that I have distressed you—forgive me for it! love me still and confide in me! I will not deceive you!'

"So spoke Lennartson, and pressed me to his heart, and in that moment I felt my heart changed. Oh, the high-

mindfulness of this man ! and his good overcomes all that is mean and little in me : it directs me, and shows me my path. I asked from Lennartson a few days' time for consideration, and set off for Svartsjö ; not to hear the nightingales sing, but to listen to the inner voice, to collect myself, to *pray* ! Oh, Sophia ! in these days and nights I have for the first time prayed from the bottom of my heart, and felt myself to be heard, and experienced the truth of the words, that 'The power of God is mighty to the weak.' In these days have I felt my will changed, my good resolutions strengthened, my mind renovated, and life and the world brighter before me.

"I returned to Stockholm to appear at the Castle-ball ; I rouged my pale cheeks, I made myself as lovely and as brilliant as possible. I would in my pride yet once more triumph over the world, which I knew with malicious pleasure would busy itself about me. After this I would accomplish an important business, that is to release, to unite with one another—two noble human beings, and after that—to vanish from the scene. Look not so mysteriously questioning at me, Sophia ; be calm ! thoughts of self-destruction live no longer in my soul ; for that it has received too great and too mild impressions.—My good angels, Selma and Lennartson, have chased the night out of me, and have let the day dawn, some beams of which must thank, must bless them. Fear no longer for me ! the life and the suffering which I expect, I shall bear in silence."

"Oh, Flora !" exclaimed I, with emotion, "how worthy are you of a more beautiful lot !"

"Do not pity me !" said Flora, with a clear and lively expression ; "do not pity me, Sophia ; I have won much, I have won that which I till now never possessed, *true human worth* ; and in this moment I feel a certainty and a peace in my soul which I never enjoyed till now. I feel that I have risen, I feel that I shall rise in the eyes of all those whose approbation and esteem are valuable to me. Oh, grant me this consciousness, however boastful it may appear ; grant it to me, it will help me to go through a heavy, a bitter hour.

"No, for myself I do not lament. I feel that I have conquered. But rather will I lament for the many who, in a situation like my own, seek for such a helper, and go on for ever forlorn ; who, through a false education, a misdirected

guidance, are shattered from the beginning, and never more can collect themselves into a whole.

"Ah! even I am shattered irrevocably, and shall never attain unity. Like a fragment of a better existence shall I go through life, perhaps merely as a warning for the present, to point towards a better future.

"Do you see that it is daylight! Do you see how the world brightens! Oh certainly will the twilight of humanity brighten also more and more! Certainly the comprehension of the great object of life, the true worth of a human being, will become ever more and more living in the human heart! Certainly will woman be more and more esteemed for her own human worth, and acknowledged in the truth of her being. And when she is so acknowledged, when she in social life has won her true position, as human being, as fellow-citizen, then first will she anew become a divine mother for the earth, and from her bosom will spring a renewed and ennobled human race!"

The fire of inspiration glowed in Flora's eyes, burned upon her cheeks, upon her eloquent lips—she was unspeakably beautiful. Beautiful also at this moment was the scene around us. The sun ascended and cast its first beams upon the heights, flamed on the spires of the church-towers, the mountains reddened; the windows of the Castle towards Logård lit themselves up. A soft sough filled with spring-life went through the trees of the field, and bowed the poplars on the river-parterre; the pennons in the haven fluttered merrily in the morning wind, and swelled by the rising Mälar waters, the foaming waves of the river rushed more grandly than ever through the arches of the North-bridge, and jubilant larks ascended above it, and snow-white sea-gulls dipped into it.

Flora and I stood long silently contemplating the increasing light and life; at length she directed her eyes to the haven, where a small black wreath of smoke raised itself, as if it would point out the way from Stockholm.

"Ha!" said she, "Gauthiod gives the sign already, and warns me to hasten."

"Will you travel abroad?" said I, astonished.

"With Felix, with my poor brother!" answered Flora. "He has been ordered to make use of the baths at Ems, and

I accompany him, both for his sake and mine. It is necessary to me at this moment to leave this place; I am here only a hinderance, and I must breathe the air of other lands. Felix remains to be my dearest care. He has never till now found the sister in me which he deserved. But from henceforth he shall find it. Perhaps sometime the brother and sister, who have suffered shipwreck in fortune and happiness, may return to their fatherland with hearts healed, and more worthy as children."

"And what will you, what intend you for your own peculiar future?"

"First and foremost, to pass several years in foreign countries. Felix and I shall travel. I will observe the world with keen vision; I will observe woman in the new and higher relations of life and society, which the present time begins to form; I will see and judge rightly, and without prejudice, and then will choose an independent position in the realm of the beautiful or of the good, an interest, an ennobling aim for my restless striving soul. Oh, Sophia! I will begin life anew! Yes, I feel it, the turning-point of my life is arrived!—Farewell the past! Farewell wavering! Farewell illusions! And now a new sun, a new earth, a new life! And God's grace over my good designs!"

With this Flora raised towards heaven her clasped hands, and tears shone in her beaming eyes. Again we both were silent. I was deeply affected. She resumed more calmly:

"See here, Sophia, a letter to Selma; and here one to Lennartson. They will say all to them. They will also say to them, that the determination I have taken is the only way which remains for me to peace and happiness. No one, who is my friend, would seek to turn me from it. Gladly would I see my Selma once more; gladly view once more the pure countenance, the good clear eyes; but I must spare her the pain of parting—she has already suffered enough for me! But this garland (and she loosened the garland of white Provence roses from her head), this shall you, Sophia, lay on her bed at her feet, and let her keep it, and wear it as a remembrance of her Flora. I know that I do not deserve so pure a remembrance, but I know also that her soul cannot preserve any other of me without suffering. In Selma's letter I have also written to her mother; greet her, greet all

whom you think trouble themselves about me, and tell them that I set off thus secretly, only to avoid parting, and spare them pain. And now I must hasten. Felix expects me; my things and my maid are already on board; I will now quickly dress myself, and then—Sophia, will you accompany me to the harbour?”

“To the world’s end, if you will,” replied I

“Thanks! You hate me then no longer?”

“Hate you! I love, I admire——”

“Hush! hush! do not drive my virtue away!”

With these words Flora vanished. She was soon dressed ready for the journey, and I was ready to attend her. It was a lovely fresh morning, full of life and spring.

Amid serious yet cheerful conversation we went down to the harbour. Our parting was heartfelt, was full of unity. Flora was firm and steadfast to the last, and only when I could no longer see the waving of her white pocket-handkerchief in the far distance I left the strand. My heart was troubled, but as I returned to our home, and thought on what change of scenes had taken place, and what news I bore to my beloved, I seemed to have wings to both soul and body—and wind and waves, and people and animals, and church towers and street stones, and heaven and earth, seemed to join in with my heart’s exulting song—

The good has gained the victory!

Oh now I shall startle my stepmother! She and Selma sleep yet. They went to bed late, says Karin. I wait impatiently, and write whilst I wait. I would not exchange my lot with that of an archangel, if—(N.B.) he had anything else to do than carry glad tidings.

The 10th.

O Joy! thou beautiful, heavenly seraph! How loveable art thou, how worthy of adoration art thou, when thou arisest bright in the tearful eyes, and beamest in the looks of the dying! How good thou art when thou fillest life’s cup to the brim for the happy and the noble on earth; merciful when thou withdrawest sad memories from the wretched, the unfortunate, and crownest his sleep with roses; how lovely and bright thou seemest to me, when I observe thy gentle movement in the human soul! Oh that thou wert an existence

that I could call forth with my prayers, with my heart's blood, then shouldst thou oftener appear on earth!

But perhaps thou wouldst be less beautiful, less enchanting, if *sorrow* did not precede thee like the sun, which never shines so beautifully on earth as after rain and tempest. Pain and joy are life's pair of wings, with which the human being raises himself to the home of perfection.

"The gentle movements of joy in the human soul!"

Oh! I have seen it to-day in my home, and among my beloved ones, although we do not venture to speak aloud thereon. Respect for Flora's memory and renunciation occasioned this; but the glory which her action threw over herself, penetrated more and more every sorrowful shadow.

Lennartson and Selma have bound themselves to each other as one being, who have long sought, and at last found each other, like two souls which were originally united in the thought of the Creator.

Their happiness has come forth out of much suffering, that now leaves free room for the play of joy; but beyond the clouds of the still melancholy which yet veils them, I heard the laugh of the god of love and the clapping of his wings. Oh, the sylph will yet dance, dance upon the roses of life!

Flora's letter to Lennartson is such that he cannot do otherwise than accept the freedom which she returns to him. She shows herself determined and clear, and prays him to permit to her the consciousness which she has, of making two beloved human beings happy, and thus regaining their and her own esteem. "Remorse and self-contempt," writes she, "would henceforth persecute me at your side, Lennartson, and you would not have been able to shield me, for you could not love me. But, separated from you, I shall approach nearer to you. Oh, Thorsten! I feel that, united to Selma, you will think of me with tenderness—I shall remain dear to you. Ah! perhaps it is rather egotism than pure love which guides me at this moment. If it be so—then forgive me!"

Lennartson's letter to Flora must throw into her soul a never to be extinguished beam of gladness and great self-satisfaction. And Flora is right; she will after this become more intimately united with him than she would have been as his wife.

My stepmother is sweet, and amuses and affects me at the

same time. She is silent and quiet, often lays her hands together and sighs ; but her sighs carry a smile in them, and glad thoughts in her heart force themselves through the grave seriousness which she considers it becoming to assume. She talks therefore beautifully about " the wonderful ordinations of Providence, and of its being the duty of human beings to submit themselves." When will she have courage to become Prince Metternich again ?

And I, for I also will be with them in feeling—I participate, and rejoice, and hope, and am thankful—but in my heart I am not glad nor easy. I am uneasy about Wilhelm Brenner, and I am not pleased with myself.

Many people remain unmarried from noble and estimable reasons, but many also from—egotistical ; that I feel in myself, and I acknowledge it with shame. One will gladly be beloved, will gladly warm oneself by the flame of a noble heart—yes, even give some warmth in return ; as much, at least, as will not disturb our convenience, our ease. But for marriage, when this is bound up with some care, some trouble in the future—for that one has no courage, no virtue !

In the mean time I wonder whether I shall see the Viking again before his journey ? Yet no ! I wonder not ! For if he will not, then *I will* ; and "*ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut.*"*

The 13th of May.

Most extraordinary occurrence in the boudoir between my stepmother and me.

As we in the afternoon were together, ruling the state, we noticed an entirely unusual accordance in our measures and views. We congratulated each other thereon, inquiring after the cause of this approach of opinion ; and then it appeared that my stepmother, whilst she read so much in certain royalist newspapers, had in some things come over to the opposition side, and I again, had through certain opposition newspapers been drawn by degrees more towards the government than before. Particularly pleased by these discoveries, and congratulating ourselves upon our independence, we determined henceforth, that we might hold the balance even, to consider ourselves as organs of both parties ; and we con-

* But, to say the truth, I have never remarked that it is so in fact ; neither do I know whether it would be advantageous that it should be so.

cluded our political discussion, by playing "patience" together.

The 14th.

Something must have gone out to the world of the altered condition and views of the family, for our "spasmodic acquaintance," who had allowed us neither to hear nor see anything of them during the dark period, live now again like gnats in the sunshine.

The Gyllenlöfs and Silfverlings overwhelmed us to-day with friendship and compliments. Lennartson came in, and then the friendship knew no bounds, but laid the boldest plans for the greatest intimacy in the future. My step-mother was polite, and let there be five formed at once; but Selma assumed her princess deportment, and replied somewhat coldly to Adele Gyllenlöf's evidences of friendship and young Silfverling's adoration.

The not spasmodic, but in all cases to us friendly and good Signora Luna, cast a glance yesterday into the new and happy relationship of the family, and her lovely eyes beamed with joy at Flora's behaviour, at Selma and Lennartson's happiness. She herself was in full court costume, and so handsome and brilliant that I could not help saying:

"Signora Luna is now in her brightest glory, and must feel herself ready for a beaming path."

She cast upon me one of those looks which reveal the depths of silent suffering, and said:

"Ah! all is not gold which glitters, and the beaming path—but it goes well! All goes, although it seems at times as if all stood still."

Baron Alexander now approached, and said with his friendly imperiousness, "I must remind you, my friend, that is nearly nine o'clock. It is time to go to the court. This will be a splendid night."

"And I," said his wife softly to me, as she arose, "I could sigh to-night, like so many others, with Tegnér:

Tell me, thou watcher! how the night is wearing;
Will there then ever be an end of it?"

"But seriously," said I, "is it not amusing to be sometimes in such assemblies of the handsome and the bright; to see life in its holiday attire?"

"It might be truly so," said Signora Luna; "the more so that one comes in contact with many agreeable and distinguished persons—if the heart were only light! But—how few there are who go through life with light hearts! And perhaps it is as well so; one might otherwise become too frivolous." She smiled pensively, moved to me, and vanished, obscured by the Great Alexander.

"Domestic happiness or unhappiness!" See, then, that which equalises more than anything else human lot; places often the hut beside the palace, the day-labourer near to the king; whilst it makes an immeasurable difference between the life and happiness of the mighty.

"Domestic troubles," wrote lamentingly a king who already is gone from the theatre of the world, "are in this respect different to public ones, that they bow down the soul by repeated pains, which every moment calls forth."

"I am the most fortunate man," wrote, in a confidential letter, another king, who yet bears upon his brow one of the noblest crowns of Europe, "and you will not find many who, like me, after a twenty years' acquaintance and a nineteen years' marriage, finds now the heart of his wife as divine, her eyes as heavenly, as in the first days of his love."

The 15th.

The Lady-Councillors-of-Commerce, Mrs. and Miss! Miss cast about her great peering glances, made significant gestures, and put sundry amusing questions, thus:

"Well! when shall you remove to Torneå? Has Miss Selma no desire to see a book, which is called 'Instructions in Frugal Housewifery?' I think it would be of use. Shall I purchase it for the young lady? The price is sixteen shillings banco."

A coffee-council, in the afternoon, between two happy mothers, my stepmother and Mrs. Rittersvärd. The first unclouded day in June will beam on the union of Ake Sparrsköld and Hellfrid Rittersvärd.

Why write of all this? To try to forget that on which I now think.

The Viking sets sail on Sunday afternoon. The youngest boy is still confined to bed. Is it possible that Brenner will not see me, not say farewell to me before he sets off?

The 16th.

Letters from Flora have enlivened us all. The change shows itself to be sincere; her state of mind is astonishingly firm and clear. But why should people wonder at it? When once heaven has opened itself over a human head, has opened to his prayer, and it is a path upon which "angels ascend and descend," then that takes place in the human being which has not been calculated upon. Then powers are in motion, then communications take place, before which the wisest and best on earth bow themselves in wonder and reverence. But he must be left alone, alone with the Eternal.

That is also the last and highest stadium of all human education, of all higher development. For this, social life labours with all its wisest dogmas and institutions to elevate mankind. In strife with men, humanity never arrives there. Trusting in them, then is it a self-bewilderment. But sanctified and sustained by it, humanity ascends thither where even they cannot come. A new life, a new relationship then arises for it. The *immediate relationship* to the Eternal good, which will willingly give gifts to men, and give gifts of the Spirit without measure. This relationship on the side of the human being I call child-like. It is the innermost of life. It may be attained by the most simple of men, if his will be good; and it can *not* be attained by the greatest philosopher, if he, after he have ascended the highest steps of logic, cannot, as a child needing help, fall down upon his knees, and call upon his Father and the Father of all.

How happy was Lennartson this evening, as he with his beloved Selma and her mother laid out plans for their future life. How amiable he was, in the joy in the overflowing life to which he then for the first time gave free course! He let his bride have no peace at all, which naturally caused her some disquiet.

And my stepmother, what joy she had!

And I—oh I enjoyed myself in seeing them happy. I felt vividly the pleasantness of a life altogether with them (for I also, so it was said—shall have my home with Lennartson), in the sympathy in everything which life has interesting and elevating in art, in science, in public and private life, by intercourse with distinguished persons and their spheres of life.

Oh I feel well, how light and cheerful life must be in the daily enjoyment of what Ehrensvärd calls "the joyful needs," but——

But what sayst thou, silent talisman, which beats in my breast? And thou, Wisdom, baptized in the eternal waves of love—thou whom I have called to guide my feet, to light my life—what sayst thou?

Here a life filled with lovely enjoyments—comfortable, sunshiny, cheerful in the society of noble and worthy people, but who—need not me, and who without me have enough. And *there*, a sinking home, which I could sustain, orphan children whose mother and cherisher I could be, a husband noble and good whom I could love; yes, whom I—love! A life of labour and care, but in which the Eternal eye would look down brighter upon me than in the other—a life not splendid on earth, but brightened by——

Oh, can I indeed hesitate?

But Mrs. Trollman? * Now, well! One magic spirit will chase away another. That has often been done.

But the world? How will it cross itself and say, "Foolish marriage! marriage-frenzy! madness!" Now, yes: "*Quand même!*"

Selma! Lennartson! I know what they would say. But my stepmother? How it would startle my stepmother!

To-day is Saturday.

On Sunday Morning.

A note from the Viking—manly, cordial, but nothing less than unfeeling. Yet he says that he does not feel himself strong enough to take a personal leave of me, he does this therefore by writing; bids me to greet my friends from him, and hopes again to see me, and calls himself, in conclusion, my "faithful Wilhelm."

A bouquet of lovely flowers says more to me than the letter. But I regard it as unpardonable of my "faithful Wilhelm," not to see and hear his friend before he voyages to the world's end. I feel that the magic spirit moves within me.

In the Evening.

A very little time, a very little way lies often between the now and the moment which, as if with a magic stroke, changes

Troll is a ghost, a spectre.

the whole of our life's state, the whole of our future. We ourselves, for the most part, hold the magic wand in our hand; but whether we use it to create our happiness or our misfortune, that we often know not ourselves. I was, however, tolerably clear on the subject, as I set out the very moment in which Lennartson drove my stepmother and Selma in his beautiful landau to the park—set out slowly and alone on a walk towards the Skeppsholm. It was a quiet, somewhat dull, summer-mild afternoon. I saw the objects around me as though I was taking leave of them; thus greeted I the neighbourhood of the North-bridge, with its castle, statues, and quays, along the river: I said farewell to the polite world. At the beginning of the Skeppsholm-bridge I stopped. Before me lay upon its blue waters the green Skeppsholm, with its valleys and groves, with its temple built upon the rock, and reflecting itself in the sea. Behind me roared dully the mass of driving, riding, walking people, who, in festal attire, streamed out to the park. I thought on the landau which conveyed out my friends into the gay elegant world, and who had just now besought me so earnestly to take my place with them; my heart sunk; it was as if invisible hands fettered my feet and drew me back. That was a trying moment. Then began the church bells to ring; and even as the sound of the temple bells in ancient times had power to put heathen spirits to flight, so operated they even now on me. The contracting bonds loosened, and I went onward excited, but yet resolved. And as I entered into the green groves—an old man has planted them, and beautified the evening of his life, by beautifying his native city—as I looked upon the tender green leaves and thought upon the tender children, I became ever calmer and freer in mind.

When first the *long row*, or the admiralty-house, threw its dark shadow over me, a certain bashfulness returned, but of another kind. My act was unusual—how would it be judged, how would it look? And Brenner himself, how would he—

“The thousand!” said I, at last, in vexation—N.B. quite softly: “I care nothing about the whole world! I will really only say farewell to my friend! ‘*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*’”

Brenner was not at home, and was expected later. I was glad of that. I said to Mrs. Trollman, who came to me with this intelligence, and who did not appear to me like a dangerous magic spirit, that I would wait here till the Captain's return, because I had something of importance to say to him. I would in the mean time look after little Wilhelm and the other children, in case she had anything else to do. Mrs. Trollman was very much pleased with this, and I soon perceived the smell of roasting coffee diffuse itself through the house. And now by the little boy's bed, and with all the other children around me, I began to relate stories, and to feel myself in particularly good spirits. My stories were interrupted by steps which were heard in the hall, and by the assembled children's hasty and exultant outbreak to meet the beloved father. Soon was he beside his sick child, who called his name longingly. When he saw me, he remained standing in astonishment.

I rose up.

"Thou, here!" cried Brenner, and seizing my hand led me out into another room, motioning to the children to leave us together. "Thou, here, Sophia!" repeated he, and looked at me with a searching glance.

I did not leave him a long time to bewilder himself, but said:

"How couldst thou think of leaving me without saying one friendly word at parting? It was not good, it was not right of thee. I could indeed believe, that thou troubled thyself no more about me than about a sea-gull!"

Tears almost choked me.

The Viking was silent, and I continued:

"Now we may see who best understands how to love his friend. Thou wilt not come to me, but I have come to thee, to say—farewell!"

"And thou hast come merely for that purpose? Thanks!" He pressed my hand.

It was now more difficult to continue. I was silent, he was silent. At length he compelled himself, and continued with a gentle suppressed voice, "Thanks, that thou so kindly punishest my apparent negligence. May I now accompany thee home, and by so doing take leave of thy relatives?"

"Go where thou wilt; I remain here. I——"

"How?"

"I remain with thy children, Wilhelm, till thou returnest from Africa."

Brenner looked at me for a moment, and his eyes filled with tears. "Oh thou woman's heart!" said he, took my hand, and continued with a penetrating glance, "and when I come back again, what wilt thou do then?"

"What—thou wilt!" replied I.

Brenner was again silent for a moment, and then said with an agitated voice:

"These are words which, some time ago, I would have given half the remainder of my life to have heard. But now—now it is otherwise. That which I then would do, will I now no longer."

I looked upon him questioningly, amazed.

"Now," continued Brenner, "my condition is much changed. I have nothing upon earth except—these poor children!"

"I know that!" answered I.

"I understand thee, Sophia," said Brenner pensively, "and this act surprises me not, from *thee*. But it involves a sacrifice which I neither can nor may accept. Thou refusedst thy hand to the well-conditioned man, thou shalt not give it to the—beggar!"

"His kingly majesty has declared for me by word of mouth," said I, "I may do what I will with that which is my own."

"No!" replied Brenner, "that mayst thou not. For thy determination, although noble, is over hasty, and thou mayst not do that of which thou wilt repent. Thy calm life and thy property may not be sacrificed for a ruined family. That shall not be, say I! Canst thou believe me to be such an egotist, such a——"

"Be still, be still, about all that! The children may fancy that we are quarrelling, and it is not so. We can mutually think about it till thou comest home. Perhaps thou mayst find in Africa some beauty——"

"Hush then! what stupidity is that? But if I never come home? My voyage may continue long, may be stormy, dangerous—if I should never come home?"

"Then I remain here to be thy children's mother to my dying day."

"Sophia!" ejaculated Brenner, hastily, "thou art an angel,

and upon my knees must I thank thee for this word, this intention. But yet, yet I cannot accept it. It is a sacrifice, and it is indiscreet, and it is unreasonable——”

“Well then! let reason and understanding go!” replied I; “how is it worth while keeping these when one has given away one’s heart!”

And now—I lay on the Viking’s heart, clasped in his arms. He called me *his*, and challenged the whole world to part us. He placed his ring upon my finger, he led his children into my arms, he said that I would be their mother, he introduced me as his bride to Mrs. Trollman, who, in astonishment, nearly upset the coffee-pot.

“Now I shall attend thee home!” exclaimed he in conclusion; “I must tell the whole world that thou art mine!”

The Viking is somewhat stormy in his happiness, thought I, but he may now have his will. How it will startle my stepmother!

On the arm of the Viking I retraced my way home. His heart was over full, and how charming was it to me to listen to the swell of the waves within it; but when he kissed my hand directly under the nose of the watchman (the nose of the watchman of Skeppsholm), I was obliged to beseech of him that he would not expose me, nor behave himself like a sea-robber!

“Confess now,” exclaimed he, “that thy philosophy has not helped thee much, has not prevented thee from venturing thy life with a sea-robber like me.”

“Philosophy!” exclaimed I; “it is precisely that which has conducted me to thee.”

“Ah, bah! that I will not hear. Confess honestly out that it is love—pure, heavenly, irrational love!”

“No! not irrational——”

“Then rational love! now thou talkest well. Why use any ceremony about the word? It is really life’s primal word—my beloved! And actual magic power hast thou never without it. Only do not come with ‘Christian’s love,’ or I shall throw either thee or myself into the sea!”

Of course I called him “a heathen,” and such things. Amid such conversation we came home.

Fortunately it happened that we found my stepmother, Selma, and Lennartson, all together in the drawing-room.

The Viking threw the doors wide open, and with my hand clasped in his, he marched up into the middle of the floor, and introducing himself before the three sitting ones, exclaimed, "Congratulate us now! See you not that we are bridegroom and bride!"

With a cry of joy Lennartson sprang up and clasped us both in his arms, amid the most cordial words. Selma sprang up also, half shocked, half glad, and embracing me exclaimed, 'Sophia!'

And my stepmother, she sate quiet on the sofa, so struck, so astonished, so startled, that I thought she would have a stroke, and with that was quite terrified.

I now hastened up to her, kissed her hand, and besought her earnestly to forgive my apparent reserve; but that I myself, only two hours ago, did not know my destiny; and I began now a short explanation of the progress of the affair, but was interrupted by Brenner, who would relate the affair in his own way, and thus I fancy nobody rightly understood it, although every one was evidently affected and pleased, my stepmother also.

In the mean time the clock struck eight, and the Viking must go on board. As we now must part, it was hard for us.

"Accompany me to the linden-trees below," prayed he; "I must still say a few words to thee under God's free heaven."

I went with him under the linden-trees, which were gilded by the evening sun. We seated ourselves on a bench.

"Ah, here it is beautiful!" said Brenner. "Within there it was too narrow for me, too heavy to part from thee. In the morning I shall be upon my free sea; but thou, Sophia, wilt then be in a narrow and quiet dwelling, and that—for my sake."

"I shall be with thy children, Wilhelm!" said I.

"I have often," continued Brenner, "heard thee speak with dread of the heavy, the oppressive, the troublesome in life—of the suffering—Sophia! I fear, I fear for that which thou undertakest, for thy strength, thy steadfastness!"

"Thou dost not rightly know me, Wilhelm. Remember that I am of the people and race of the Wasastjernas! Besides—the suffering which I feared is *that* which fetters the soul, not *that* which elevates it, which ennobles it. Thou

hast many times spoken of suffering as of what is noble, beautiful —and I have felt for some time that thou art right."

"Thou feelest, therefore, that thou wilt suffer, that thou mayst become mine?"

"Yes, Wilhelm; for I know that in the world there are storms, and manifold dangers, for those who are out upon the great sea; and I know that every stormy night will find me sleepless and anxious. But every evening and every morning I shall clasp together the hands of thy children in prayers for their father, and their innocent sighs shall part the clouds above thy head, and calm wind and wave. Oh Wilhelm, be easy about me! I am glad to love and to suffer. But," continued I, for I wished to calm Brenner's excited feelings, and give the conversation a more cheerful turn, "thou hast not given me any directions for the education of thy children. I presume that I must not teach them—philosophy!"

"Teach them in heaven's name whatever thou wilt—yes, even philosophy, and especially that philosophy which gives thee to me. Teach them that love is the most beautiful wisdom. And now—I must leave thee, my, *my* Sophia. Remain here; let me see thy white figure under the blue heaven, under the green trees to the last!" He took my pocket-handkerchief, which was wet with tears, and hid it in his breast, as he said "it shall be my Bethel-flag!" Yet once more he pressed my hand, yet once more his faithful glance sunk deep into my eyes, and down into the depths of my heart. He then moved off with great strides. Near the river, before he was hidden by the houses, he turned round once more and looked back, and waved a farewell with his hand. Thus vanished he from my sight. I slowly returned home.

Lennartson was gone, to take leave of his friend on board the frigate. My stepmother and Selma hastened to me. The former was evidently a little dissatisfied. But I now opened my heart to them both, and let them see all which had moved within it for some time.

I had the little egotistical pleasure of seeing my Selma's tears fall, because I must leave her; and the happiness to see that my stepmother perfectly approved of the resolution which I had taken, and did not altogether disapprove of my

mode of action. A little troubled she was as to how it should be made known to the world, and how this would regard it; but after we had made all our "*reflexions chrétiennes et morales*" upon the circumstance, we found that the affair was not so dangerous; nor was the world either, if people only faced it with an honest mind and a polite manner.

As we separated for the night, my stepmother clasped round my arm a beautiful bracelet of her own hair, and said:

"You must not think, my sweet Sophia, that I did not suspect, that I did not in silence rightly see how all was going forward here, although I have said nothing! I have foreseen it altogether!"

"No! has my dear mother actually?" exclaimed I.

"Um, um, um, um!"

"Prince Metternich again!" thought I. "Good-night, my sweet, gracious mamma!" said I.

Monday Morning, 26th of May.

Another day! another change of light and shade. Now friendly day! I salute thee in my new home. Mildly dawns life there.

Thither have I been accompanied by my mother, Selma, and Lennartson. There I hope often to see them again.

Already I feel myself quite at home, and so is Mrs. Trollman with me. The upper magic spirit and the lower magic spirit have concluded a fundamental peace upon certain conditions, which stand in our Lord's hand. Merrily dance the waves without upon the Fjärd, and bear the Viking away from his home. I bear upon my breast some words from him, written on board the frigate, and conveyed to me I know not by what heavenly wind. There is *love* in them, and life's primeval word lives also in my heart.

Within, the children wake up out of the arms of sleep, and for me rise up cares for them, and for house and home.

An end now to my life of quiet observation and daily sketches. Away with thee, gossiping, but dear pen, which took up so much time! And in truth, when one has given away freedom, reason, and heart, then is it well also to lay aside—THE DIARY.

THE SOLITARY.

WE have many a time seen in a sterile wild spot, a lovely flower standing alone, surrounded and secluded there by unfriendly circumstances, ardently, but vainly seeking for the sun, in whose light thousands of her happier sisters rejoice themselves, but which the barren overhanging rocks will not allow to force its way to her. Becoming pale and powerless, the flower, by degrees, bows to the earth the head, which was created to be raised upwards, and at last conceals her evanescent being amid the gloomy circumstances which are guilty of her fate.

One eye, which has accidentally discovered the Solitary, rests upon her with a sort of pity, whilst thought inquires to what purpose, and why she stands there so without joy to herself, and joy to any one? These involuntary hermits of the world of flowers have their prototypes in a higher sphere, and something of these I expect to recognise in the one whose hand has penned down the following thoughts and features of a life not enlivened by many sunbeams.

It is no direct diary, no witty and interesting journal, that she has written—ah, such are never written, except in the quiet hope that a confidential friend will sometime look through the lines which preserve the remembrance of our fate and our feelings, will sigh over our cares, rejoice over our joys, smile over our witty sallies, love and hate with us, in one word—feel with us, and thereby become more intimately united with us;—No, her unarranged thoughts were like withered leaves, which the autumn wind shakes from the trees and strews over the earth—even as they are the offspring of feelings, which in no beloved breast on earth may hope to find echo more.

May 17th.

It is spring! From my window I see the clouds, chased

by fresh gales, like glittering swans sailing away in the clear blue; yet above them I see the eagle soaring higher and higher forth into the path of light. Ah! that I could do as she!—would that I could feel warm life-dispensing spring air! How narrow and cold is it within here, how fresh and glorious there in the distance, where the crimson of morning stands! I would—ah, know I indeed rightly what I would?

Secret and mysterious yearning,
From the soul's unfathomed depths,
Like a misty form ascending,
That is chased by quiet winds,
Floating in the farthest distance,
Thou dost draw me far off, far off,
Towards the undiscovered shores!

Over life's rose-flowering gardens,
And her verdant groves of hope,
Thou dost lead me, and enfoldest,
In dark grave-clothes, all the earth;
As the soul which, from home-sickness,
Wasteth in a foreign land,
Where it sees no single flower.

On my mind with might thou seizest,
And dost call forth plenteous tears
From a sweet and unknown sorrow;
And my heart, ah, how it beateth!
Will break forth from out its prison,
Will come forth to light and warmth,
Longing for another home!

There, where from the flaming orient,
Gloriously ascends the morn;
There, where in the western cloud-land,
Sinks the golden torch of day,
Yearns my ardent soul to flee;
There, my urging spirit drives me,
Over land and over sea.

Eagle, which so proudly soareth
To the golden sphere of light;
Fleecy cloud, which gentle breezes
Bear into the boundless space;
Tell me, in the far-off distance
Is it all so bright and glorious—
Reigneth freedom there and peace?

Would I might, O bird, speed with thee,
On the fire-path of the sun!
Cloud, with thee that I might float forth
To the evening's purple shore,
And on gentle islands pillowed,
Full of joy no tongue can speak,
Sing there my own cradle-song!

Thus I cried. Down to his eyrie,
 From his flight the eagle flew:
 In free space the cloud had vanished.
 Lonesome stood I. And the wind played
 With my wailings, as if sweeping
 O'er a sad Eolian-harp;
 And in empty air they sounded,
 Without echo, without answer!

I have heard speak of ice-palaces, and I myself live in a moral ice-palace. The Count and the Countess, my gracious patrons, are statues of ice; and I, I am a poor flickering little flame, lighted in one of the lamps of the saloon of the castle, which, by degrees, is going out, from frost and icy-breath.

Oh, it must still be indescribably delightful to feel, to love, to live; in one word—to love.

I have, however, never loved anything else but my own fleeting ideal. Never shall I be able to see it realised upon earth!

I am to-day twenty years old. Who troubles themselves about it? Who offers to me a flower in my flowering-time? Ah, if nobody rejoices because one has been born, one might very well wish that it had never been so.

I would willingly purchase the caresses of a father and mother with my life. He who has never experienced their innocent delight, has been shut out from the Eden of childhood.

When I read in novels and plays, of children who, when arrived at mature years, have found again their parents whom they have long considered as lost, I sympathise with heartfelt emotion which carries me out of myself. I exclaim, "Father, mother!" open my arms and weep—and yet I know that mine sleep for ever.

All the people whom I know have something in the world about which they interest themselves, to which they attach themselves. They have parents, they have children, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends, or, in necessity, a dog, a cat, a bird; in short, some sort of creature for which they live, to which they are useful, and which requites, with devotion, the care and tenderness that is shown to them. Or they have

an occupation, an object; in one word, a something which enlivens the present, and opens the future.

I wonder very much sometimes, for what purpose and wherefore I was born. If I were to question the Baroness about this, she would reply: "To sew for me, to be at hand when I ring my silver bell, to assist me at my toilet, to make of an evening the fourth at my card-table—and besides this, to exercise my patience." Good heaven! am I too proud, if I think such an object mean and miserable?

Some people have an interest in life, which I do not envy them—namely, to quarrel with one another. That is the pleasure of the Count and the Countess, as soon as they meet for the day; or I fancy that they seek one another only to give each other this refreshment. In one thing only do they agree, and that is, to reprove me severely for the least error.

If I were placed by fate in a condition to rule over others—for example, in the place of the Countess—how would I carefully avoid severity and sternness in the reproofs and corrections which I found it necessary to give to my servants and dependents, especially to those who lived in my family! Their negligences would in the whole be so trifling to me, in comparison so wholly insignificant; because, even if they did occasion me a little inconvenience—yet they could neither disturb the peace of my heart, nor cost me painful tears—nor depress and molest my temper; whilst, on the contrary, my severity all too easily could make the faulty person feel all these evils. It is one of the great problems of life, not to occasion suffering to others, and even the most subtle syllogisms cannot find an excuse for those who have wounded the heart of a fellow-creature. For their own sakes also, those who have power should be kind and considerate towards their dependents. People may be often better served in trifles when they are more feared than loved; but how small is this gain in comparison with the loss, as is shown in all accidental important occasions. Then the devoted servant soon shows himself as a friend, and he who is obedient out of fear as an enemy.

To play at cards every evening from seven o'clock till ten

with three persons, who, like the Count, the Countess, and the old President M——, incessantly quarrel over their game and their counters (for we do not play for money), is a mortal pastime. The kings and the honours are to me actual murderers of pleasure. This evening occupation makes me feel still more intolerably how the whole day is for me like the——

Poor little bird with fettered wings! In vain thou attemptest to soar away—thou escapest not—thou feelest for what thou wast created—thou wouldst, like thy fellows, bathe thyself in the pure, sunny atmosphere; like them sink thy airy freedom—and thou art fettered to the dust. Painful, painful is thy condition. So also is the condition of him who, with the ideal of perfection and felicity in his breast, bound by the fetters of mediocrity, yearningly goes about, yearningly strives, combats, wearies himself, hopes and despairs, and at last sinks down beneath the immovably burdening hand of fate. With a thousand noble powers of activity within his soul, he sees every way to self-formation and usefulness closed against him——

Impatience is a painful feeling. If we would suffer less, we must be patient.

If I could only do good in some way I would not complain. But I can—do nothing, nothing. In order to be completely captive, in addition to the walls of a prison, one must be a woman, must, like me, be poor and dependent. I know that in this respect I have many sisters of destiny in the world. Oh, my poor friends! how gladly would I be able to console you! But, ah! I also am a fainting pilgrim in the wilderness—I would extend to you a refreshing draught—and have not one drop of fresh water for myself.

When a person has deeply felt one single affliction, he understands all other sufferings.

I see two pictures, two sides of life—as unlike to each other as day and night are. On the first, what life, what pomp of colouring! The altars of love and of domestic happiness stand there garlanded with eternally fresh flowers. Beneath the shadow of laurels and palms, the fine arts exer-

cise their delightful play, and drink freely, from the glorious, richly changing world which surrounds them, the nectar of inspiration. The sciences take their pleasurable, peaceful way to sunny heights. Everything lives, moves, mounts upwards, goes forwards, becomes clearer, purer, more significant. From order, beauty and the dominion of the great whole, every lesser part enfolds itself in the fulness of life, of grace and freedom. Nothing is mean, powerless, and heavy. On the contrary, all is great, rich, and points to immortality. Even misfortune has glory; it has its honour, its song of victory. The lightnings of the tempest, and the quiet magnificence of a bright sun, light up alternately the scene, and lend to it constant majesty. The second picture—behold a gloomy, misty autumn day—behold weary wanderers, who, upon a wild, stony heath, seek for a resting-place. They would make a fire to warm themselves by, but a still, icy penetrating drizzling rain extinguishes the flame, and at last, even every glimmering spark in the ashes. Behold wretchedness become so wretched that it loses compassion for itself; behold how misfortune hardens the unfortunate against others, who are as unfortunate as themselves. Behold disgust, life-weariness—behold—ah, no, rather behold it not! close, if it be possible to thee, thy eyes, thou whose life resembles this picture. Mist and clouds that whirl above us—ah! sink deeper down, and conceal from us the horrors which surround us, and our desolate, awful path.

Year after year goes on slowly. To me they are all like gloomy autumn-days.

Reproofs? for what reason? I do not deserve them. I complain indeed not. No expression of discontent, no murmur escapes my lips. I am thankful for the maintenance which is given to me (out of charity, they say). I am obedient, submissive; I endeavour to fulfil all which is required from me. But I am not cheerful, they say, not merry; I always let my head hang down. Ah, if I must look cheerful, let them give some joy to my heart! I have, however, in order to please those to whom I owe obedience, studied before the glass, that I might find out the look which would give to my countenance the most cheerful and contented

expression. At last, I am obliged, in contemplating these mournful, compulsory smiles, to weep right bitterly.

I read lately in a book, a sort of treatise on moral health, full of good advice against the sickness of the soul: "If thy condition be too oppressive, and thou feelest thyself unhappy in it—then change thy condition." Would he indeed be unfortunate if he could do this?

Ah, I am of genteel birth, and the proud, distant relatives who, after the death of my parents, took the orphan in the cradle, have the right of parents over me, although they have never shown to me their tenderness. Still, however, they have placed themselves as such. I must either submit to them, or be ungrateful—I have no other choice. Besides this, where could I go?

Marry—and marry M——? Never! I am not romantic; but I must be able to entertain esteem and friendship for my husband, if I would find a shadow of happiness in marriage. M—— is avaricious, has a hard heart, and is always in ill-humour—qualities which are intolerable to a wife who has a heart. Besides this, he seeks not a friend in me, not a true companion in joy and suffering, not an affectionate wife—but only a housekeeper—and some one who will bear his ill-humours and his oddities without murmuring. And I should take such a husband, only to get married—never, never at all! I am too good for that—I feel my womanly worth too well, and never can nor will (let others do what they may) regard myself as a piece of merchandise. Most cordially do I compassionate those who, in a condition like mine, only to change this, accept of offers which are good in the opinion of the world, but which in reality are wanting of what is most necessary to a happy marriage—namely, all that can ennoble the heart and make it happy. Sooner or later the blinded ones discover that they have only exchanged a less suffering for a greater one.

Ardent, warm souls must find in marriage the supremest happiness or misery.

I must hate all that is mean and contemptible. I feel that I should hate M., and know not how miserable and contemptible I myself might in the end become as his wife.

I recollect having read some verses of Haug, which, with a little alteration, may be turned to my thoughts.

HE.

Oh women, ye were angels to the lover,
And now are devils when the wedding's over!

SHE.

Why thus it is, is not so hard to tell,
That which appeared a heaven we find a hell.

In the original, she is the complainant, and he gives the reply. But that which one sees every day is, that a bad, immoral man, ruins the character and the temper of his wife. People accuse many women of falsehood and craft, people deplore the same faults in certain oppressed nations. The answer to the one and to the other contain, at the same time, the explanation and the excuse:

We have had tyrants for our masters

Before I would be obliged to excuse myself in such a manner, I would rather preserve unchanged my joyless uniform life to the end of my days. Life is really not so long.

A year is passed since I wrote these words, "Life is really not so long." Ah, life, nevertheless, is long; its minutes seem eternities when one suffers, when one is pressed down with life-weariness. And must we not become so, when everything resembles an eternal *no* to all our wishes and our wants?

I feel it deeply. In order to endure life, an affectionate heart requires the love and tenderness of its fellow-creatures—even as necessarily as meat and drink for the sustaining of the body.

Oh the heart that is condemned to throb for ever unresponded to! Hidden existence, which gave motion to it—in mercy let it cease to beat!

People should never contend about the misfortune, about the pain which others feel. We suffer in such different ways, and from so many different kinds of causes; we are so dissimilarly organised, and the relations of outward circumstances to our inward, our feelings, our capacities, are manifold and so various, that it is almost impossible for one

person to judge of the condition of another. Where, also, we see suffering, we should reverence it, if we are not so happy as to be able to alleviate it.

Not long since, I heard one knowing female friend admonish another, less knowing, and yet less fortunate friend: "Thou hast, indeed, committed no crime; thou canst not feel remorse; thou hast, indeed, no cares; thou hast clothes and maintenance provided for thee. About what, in all the world, needest thou disquiet thyself? Thou fanciest thyself only to be unhappy; chase away thy diseased thoughts, and thou wilt become as cheerful as me. Everybody has their cares. Perfection is really not promised to us on earth. One must use one's reason, and drive fancies out of one's head, as other people do."

The friend who was comforted in this way was silent; but looked, spite of it, more dejected than before. In her place, I should have answered, "It is true, of all the evils which thou hast named, I know none; but my unhappiness, therefore, is not the less real—it lies here in this weak, diseased heart, which I did not give to myself, and which painful gift heaven has spared thee. But precisely for that reason thou canst not judge me; and it would be just as consequent to deny the possibility of my headache because thou dost not feel it, as the pang of my heart because thou dost not understand it. Thou—but to what purpose can a longer answer tend, where my knowing friend would only shrug her shoulders? I will rather undertake in thought the part of comforter, but perform it in a different way. I would go to the sufferer and say, 'Rest upon me, we will weep together.'"

M. has been married some time. His wife is very unhappy. I hope, however, that her rapidly-increasing illness will soon release her from the horrible life which awaits her in an unhappy marriage.

I cannot devote one moment of the day to reading. The Countess cannot bear that I should read in her presence. For that reason I spend one or more hours of the night in so doing, and these are the only ones which afford me any enjoyment of soul.

Many a gentle word, rich in consolation, has in these hours been spoken to the solitary forlorn-one by pure spirits,

who have understood in their sensitive hearts all the suffering of weak humanity. Especially rich in consolation are these words, because they say to the unfortunate, "I understand thee!" It is to one, as if bewildered in a horrible desert, one heard all at once the beloved tones of a friend's voice. Then I often stretch forth my hands to the home of the noble departed, and exclaim, "Oh friend, thou who hast felt with me—hast suffered with me—send down for my refreshment a breath of the eternal rest which is now become a part of thee." But, ah! no tranquillising breath comes to us from the land of spirits—and perhaps also no eye sees from thence. I believe, too, that it is well it should be so. In order to be perfectly happy in another world, the glorified must be withdrawn from the view of misery.

But, ah, if the same voices, which are silenced in death, yet so piercingly exclaimed, "We suffer!" could once whisper to us from the opened clouds, "We are comforted!"—how much fewer bitter tears of despair would flow.

Ye dead! it may be your business to console mortals.

Why are there in our country no religious communities like those, which in other countries offer to the unhappy, who need them so much, respectable, sacred places of refuge? They might, indeed, be so well instituted that they would in no way oppose the laws of our religion and of sound reason. They might be what they should be,—sacred asylums for the unhappy, the forlorn,—for the erring who, repentant, wish to turn back to goodness,—for all those who from one cause or another are isolated in the world, who live without a determined object, without activity and without joy, and who thereby become every day more unhappy and less innocent.

All these should come together and form a great family, which, guided by wise laws, devoted itself exclusively to the purpose of honouring the Highest in the most agreeable manner—namely, by affectionate, active assistance to all necessitous persons, all such as are unjustly dealt by, all who are forlorn and unprotected;—which object of this great family, that for the most part would probably consist of indigent persons, would only be obtained by united and prudently directed powers.

Here, those without relatives and friends would knit among

themselves the holy and affectionate bond of the heart, and would find, mother, sister, and friend,—would by their side, and in noble emulation with them, clothe and instruct the neglected child, tend the sick, comfort the mourners,—in one word, might so live each day, that in the evening they would be able to say, “It was not lost.” Here might she who had gone astray turn back to virtue and to God, begin a new life and a new happiness, might feel the peace of innocence and the encouraging joy of virtue. Here might the unhappy one who is embittered by the world and man, find a home full of love and gentleness and good spirits, whose harmonious voices would soon pour peace and rest into the wounded heart. Here might the noble one, who in a brilliant sphere had felt her heart contracted by the nullity and the misery of the great world, descend, and in the peaceful shades of a quiet, but useful life, become really great. The ardent, the passionate, to whom nature gave the soul of Alexander, and fate gave only fetters, whose eccentric power consumed themselves and others, would here let their flames burn upon the altars of devotion and benevolence, and feel in the joy of voluntary renunciation that the thorny garland of a saint is a loftier, a more beautiful object of endeavour, than worldly greatness, than the world’s song of praise, and that renown which yet reaches not to the stars. Here might all those who by nature, by fortune, or by the world, have been treated with severity, be embraced as by a heavenly mother, who, full of mild seriousness and pure love, would lead her children by a quiet, happy, and virtuous life to the eternal home, where love, truth, and felicity first meet with their prototype. Oh beautiful and blessed life—noble institution—innocent charming dream—would that it could sometime be realised!

I have sometimes a feeling of bitterness, which I seek to overcome—of envy, which I seek to destroy in its first shoots. But ah, how much does it not cost to preserve oneself good and gentle, when daily and hourly a thousand trifles, like pricking needle-points, irritate to displeasure and indignation. Neither should I have strength to be so, if many a time a single prayer for strength and patience did not lend it to my breast,—if many a time the reading of a good book did not call forth some observations in my soul which elevate

it above the nothingness of this world. But ah! it sinks again.

If I might, however, only breathe a little fresh air. The sun shines so magnificently—the air is so clear—the snow so white! Oh if I could for a few minutes be in the country—see the dark green woods, and hear their soughing—could speed across snow-covered plains—breathe of the clear light air;—in one word, could see free nature and feel myself free—how happy I should be!

Had not illusions, the enchanting, deceitful syrens, filled the ardent fancy of my ardent childhood—had I not desired so much from fate—then I could better have endured that cold life which is become my lot. That early novel-reading, how much poison it lays in young minds! What young girl of seventeen, who is only gifted by nature with ordinary attractions—who has a warm heart—and what heart is indeed cold at seventeen!—that has read novels, plays, and romantic poems—does not see, with entire certainty in herself, the some-time heroine in a novel, a poem, nay, even in a tragedy? The death of a tragedy-heroine is so fearfully beautiful, so sublime, so admired, so wept over, that it appears quite enviable; and sometimes the young reader weeps with indescribably painful joy over herself and her sublimely moving future fate, in the girl murdered by the hand of her lover.

The young girl steps out into life, and expects, with strained impatience, to see it move around her full of love, full of great and beautiful actions, and rich in sentiments and events; and finds, often only what I have found, poverty in everything; and could almost fancy that a hostile fairy had suddenly changed the enchanting magic palace into a horrible, fearful prison.

Her brilliant, varnished morning dream, has embittered to her the whole day.

If I were an instructress, I would, above all things, endeavour to defend my young pupils from that which, in the beginning, could excite and heat the imagination. I would endeavour, in every way, to prevent them adorning life with flowers which it did not possess, that they might be able some time to gather the few which it actually has. Therefore, my little friends, you must labour early to exercise your young

powers upon that which lies near to you, and is useful and good within your sphere. When you are become older, you must labour still more and truly with attention and zeal—must never dream over life, but must use it, and at the same time enjoy it. Many grown-up people resemble the child who wept because it could not have the moon—these are they who have early begun to seek for their happiness in the clouds.

Often, when I hear tell how one or another has met with a joyful change or an unexpected piece of good fortune—when I see how spring follows winter, and makes it forgotten; how sunshine succeeds to rain, calm to tempest—there awakes in me too a joyous feeling, and I think, “All things change; all things upon earth change, like the earth itself; also for me too will there probably some time be a change. Hope is a fountain, whose secret and hidden veins well forth eternally in the human breast.”

But when I hear of disappointed hopes, of wishes never fulfilled, of prisoners for a lifetime, then my courage sinks, and I ask myself why should it be better with me than with others?

Sleep, ye feelings, wishes, hopes—sleep, and leave me at rest!

To lose interest in oneself, and in all that surrounds one, is to be sure sad, but yet at last it is always a kind of rest.

You say that the country is beautiful, that life there is pleasant, that you are happy, that you are beloved. I believe it—I believe it; so much the better for you, but what good is it to me?

No! and should I also feel my privations a thousand times more deeply, still I will not, I could not become cold or indifferent to the happiness of my neighbour. Oh, love, enjoy, and rejoice yourself! Let everything, to the very smallest worm, pant with joy, and only I, I alone, possess nothing, I will praise thee, God of goodness!

He too, who seems to me so great and good; he, that worthy image of God upon earth—may he be happy! would that I could purchase for him, by my life of renunciation, a life for him full of affluence and heavenly joy!

And how? should I then indeed be unhappy

Since I see him, hear him, some changes have taken place in me. The air is clearer—lighter.

Why does my heart beat when I hear his step, his voice even at a distance? Why do I become so painfully embarrassed when he approaches me? Why do I feel my cheeks burn?

His countenance is proud but gentle; his whole being full of a noble consciousness; it shows itself in his bearing, in his gait, in his unconstrained and graceful movements; one sees, one feels, that he has the consciousness of making by his exterior an agreeable and respect-inspiring impression, and precisely on that account he never thinks about it—and on that account it operates so certainly. The forehead is lofty and free, the eyes flash with fire and brightness, the nose is easily and lightly arched—in all his features, in his whole deportment, is revealed the development of a free, powerfully, beautiful nature, which has only sought through the outward a significant expression of the inward. Freshness and life pervade his conversation as well as his countenance, and when he speaks, one feels that the fires of truth and goodness which sparkle in his eyes, dwell also in his soul. His voice is sometimes, perhaps, too strong and loud for the tone of conversation, but it raises itself upon the fire-pinions of thought and of feeling. It proceeds from a breast in which no single feeling is stifled or fettered. It is the voice of freedom, and seems made to speak for her. Thus nobly, thus beautifully gifted by nature and fortune, ought he not also to be good? Yes! he is good—good as I image to myself the angels. That eye, which so coldly and calmly can see danger and death approach, which glances with such defiance and scorn on tyrants and voluntary slaves—that eye has also tears of sympathy for the sufferings of a child, for the quiet pain of a woman. And should he not be good when he is so superior, so admired, so beloved! Elected to be king, he might perhaps forget his crown!

By the side of this glorious image I have, for the sake of the remarkable contrast, placed another, and contemplated now the one, now the other. This image, which is related to the first, like the shadow to the light, is my own. My de-

portment is dejected, it betrays the condition of my soul. My movements are, especially in his presence, often constrained and childish; this proceeds in part from the consciousness of my few charms—in part from silly shame, which infuses into me a stupid vanity on account of my dress, which is almost mean, in comparison with that of others in my condition of life. I venture to speak but little, and when I speak my voice is low, and my words are often certainly inarticulate, because they have been accustomed to be silenced so severely; perhaps, also, because his eagle-glance rests so attentively upon me, and he bends himself forward to listen to me. My eyes—earlier they had fire, expression, and animation, were clear and blue as the heaven—now they are feeble, without colour and expression—they resemble extinguished flames. Earlier my countenance had life and freshness—now that grey-yellow colour, which indicates my past life, has spread itself by degrees all over it, and has chased away every grace. I could formerly laugh—I have forgotten how. My smile is melancholy. It is a pale, autumn-like sunshine, which speedily hides itself in dark clouds. Wearied by perpetual labour, and combating against the ever-growing desires after a brighter and more friendly life, a certain indifference and coldness has by degrees overcome my soul—I have lost interest in myself and my own fate. I have by degrees carried my hopes to the grave, and every one has taken with it something of my life into the grave.

He is good—too good! Like the sun which rejoices with its light even the smallest flower, he wishes by his fire, his fresh spirit, his cheerfulness, to enliven even me. But ah! the most beautiful sun cannot bring again life to the flower which, already withered, has sunk its head to the earth.

He is very well read, has travelled much, has seen much, heard, perceived, and thought; it is, therefore, not to be wondered at that his words are rich in meaning. When I have quietly listened to him with rapture for whole hours, it is to me as if I heard beautiful music, whose pure changeful melodies open to me an inner world full of rich infinite feelings.

Besides this, everything, as well what concerns things as

ideas, becomes to me clearer and more distinct, as if in a dark gloomy picture-gallery all at once the day burst in and lighted up the pictures, the subjects of which I before had only darkly imagined. And if he turn towards me whilst he unfolds his rich noble ideas, and full of goodness inquires, "Is it not so? do not you think so too?"—then he reads, probably in my eyes, my quiet admiring answer.

He spoke yesterday of his childhood. He has been caressed by father and mother; he was carried about in their arms, upon their hearts; and I!—when I was a child, when I became older, now even, always—always has my caressing hand, my loving heart, been repelled. Well then, rejected and yet proud heart, cease to proffer thyself yet further; and if thou must love nevertheless, break amid thy own throbbings rather than betray thyself, rather than place thyself in danger of being anew rejected, despised——

Quiet nights, why do ye no longer vouchsafe to me peaceful beneficial sleep? And thou, my heart, why dost thou throb so?

A certain agreeable consciousness awakens sometimes in me. I am then not so mean—not so altogether insignificant in the eyes of another! He shows me esteem, nay, attention; he places value on my judgment; he encourages me to cultivate my talents: but that is done only out of goodness, out of heavenly compassionate goodness. God bless him!

It is too late, too late, merciful passer-by. Dost thou not see that the frost of many nights has lain upon the plant? Never again will it raise its head.

My daily prayer—that which gives to me the greatest pleasure, is: "O God, give to him everything, which thou hast found it good to withdraw from me!"

What joy, to pray for those whom one loves! What joy it is for me to think that my feeling for him should assume the form of a guardian angel, to turn from him a danger, to lead to him a blessing!

But never, never shall he suspect how much I have loved him! Never shall he direct to me a contemptuous, pitying glance! It would be to me a dagger-blow

I will burn these papers, my only confidants; and my heart shall be the quiet grave of my feelings.

Oh, death! merciful death, why comest thou not? How delightful to me would be the wafting of thy refreshment-bringing pinions!

I have had to-night a strange, but beautiful dream. It seemed to me that I walked in a garden full of flowers. It was spring; the birds sang, the heaven was clear, the air mild and pure, all was beautiful around me—but I did not feel myself happy. I wandered softly along, and looked towards Alfred, who walked in the same direction with myself, but upon another path, separated from me by a little stream, whose silver waves sprang forward one over another, and whispered, "How charming, how charming, it is to rock upon cool waves!"

And I was obliged to repeat for myself, "How charming, how charming!" Alfred also looked incessantly towards me, and it seemed to me that our looks by degrees met.

All at once he went down to the shore, and stepped into a little boat which floated across the stream, and suddenly paused at my feet. Alfred reached forth his hand to me to enter. I would not, and wept, I knew not rightly why. Then he took my hand, and drew me with gentle force near him in the boat. I wept still, but felt myself not unhappy.

Then the boat, as if guided by invisible hands, began to move itself, and rocked lightly and pleasantly down the stream, whilst the silver-waves splashing leapt around it and sang melodiously, "How charming it is, to rock together upon cool waves!" I wept no longer.

Alfred and I talked with each other, and that which we said enchanted us. We floated softly away under balmy-breathing flower-arches of lilacs and roses. The flowers loosened themselves from their stems and fell down upon us, whilst voices from them whispered, "How blessed it is to love one another, and to be united!" and we repeated amid

joyful feelings, "How blessed!" Then came the night, but a night without darkness, for all the flowers began to shine in their bright colours, and every wave looked upward with a little bright shining diamond in its point. Above our heads floated a light cloud, from which beamed millions of stars. All at once Alfred said, "See there the grave!" And before us I saw something dark, formless, horrible, into which we were hastily driven. I felt, however, no fear. Then something like the wafting of a wing touched our eyelids, and we slept. But our sleep had lovely dreams, and we ceased not to see one another. Then it was to me as if a gentle kiss was pressed upon our lips, a kiss like that with which a mother awakens her sleeping child, and we awoke. A beaming morning-red surrounded us. We held one another by the hand, and ascended ever higher and higher into an atmosphere of rose-odour. I felt my being light and ethereal. Every particle of heaviness, of depression, of discomfort, was vanished; I felt it was for ever. In a sea of crystal clearness, which lay below us, our figures were reflected, and I saw myself so beautiful that it enchanted me: "Now, for the first time," thought I, "I am worthy of him!" In the midst of the transporting feeling of a pure and increasing joy, stole suddenly the thought through my soul, "If all this should be only a dream, and I should wake no more in dream, but in reality!" Ah, truly, all was only a dream. I perceived all at once the cry of the night-watch. "The clock has struck one!" and the bell of the Countess which called me to her. The Countess fancied she heard a mouse in her sleeping-room, and allotted to me the part of a cat, which I perform extremely unskilfully.

Great misfortune enhances the powers of the soul; she mounts up to heaven from the flames of combat. It is an apotheosis, although upon the wings of the tempest. But those hourly depressing, consuming cares and disagreeables, those vexations, the cancers of life and of joy, oh, how do they not oppress the children of the dust—yet deeper into the dust!

I had just now a moment of quiet satisfaction. What was the cause of it I do not rightly know. I was alone; the sun shone into my little chamber; I felt its warmth with plea-

sure ; the shadow of a budding lilac played in the sunshine upon the green wall. I thought upon him—on his goodness. I observed a little cloud, which at some distance from the sun floated lightly by, and said to myself, "Thus will my life creep on ! Yes, ephemeral being, soon wilt thou be no more, and thy pain, thy love, will leave behind them upon earth just as little trace as this little cloud in the blue field of heaven. I shall be no more—suffer no more. Peaceful thought!"

I am in the country ! For the first time in many years, and that truly through his kind mediation, I find myself in a good, cheerful, and in every respect amiable family. Here constantly the people of the neighbouring houses assemble. They play, sing, dance, talk, and laugh, the whole day long. I am dazzled, like one who comes out of the darkness and suddenly is met by a strong sunlight. Even as the eye then experiences pain, so does my heart now. I am not ungrateful—but I feel myself solitary ; I am not happy—and never shall be so !

I am a dissonant tone in the joyous harmony which rules here ; that I feel in myself most of all.

Seldom have I seen so amiable, so interesting a person as Camilla. She is now twenty. She and her good sisters endeavour to cheer and enliven me in every possible way ; but they are—ah, they are too joyous, too happy ! they are innocent children of the light ; they have not had a presentiment of the mystery of pain. I have endeavoured to assist their amiable labours ; but my smile has perhaps not been right joyous, and one of the tears which I often feel to fill my eyes has perhaps, against my will, rolled down my cheek and been seen ; or my deportment, reserved, through habit, repels them ; in short, I see that they are not at home near me, and feel themselves restrained in their innocent animation ; and they would certainly leave me to my own mournful self, if they were not prevented doing so by their goodness and politeness.

Ah, what has the owl to do among the larks ? Terrify

and silence their innocent songs? No; it is better that it return to its own dark nest.

My name day. I had forgotten it. Camilla and her sisters surprised me with flowers and songs; they crowned me with flowers, embraced me, besought me to be gay,—said that they loved me. Amiable, merciful Samaritans, if indeed your anxious labours cannot heal the wounds of the sufferer, yet she will never forget to bless you for your goodness.

He reproached me with gentleness for my reserve. He wished that I would seem joyful. I will attempt it.

Last evening, Camilla sung. He stood behind her chair. When she had finished, she turned herself half round, looked up at him modestly blushing, and asked—"Was not this the piece which you wished for?" I did not hear his reply, but I saw his beaming eye meet hers, which she cast down. Why did she cast it down? Beautiful, graceful Camilla! Look up gratefully to heaven, if thou perceive that feeling in his eyes which I read in thine.

His looks follow her. That is not to be wondered at. She is a rose in her full bloom, lovely, good, and joyous. He gave her a nosegay lately of heliotrope, and a bee crept out of the flowers and flew to me, who sate at a distance, and stung me in the hand. I repressed with difficulty an exclamation of pain, but yet I did it. I would not have disturbed the two by any means, they looked so amiable and happy. I can give no joy, but neither will I disturb any.

And for that reason I must very soon return to my gloomy home. That is now more suitable for me.

I have endeavoured to give him a pleasure. I have arranged and adorned Camilla's brown hair, which of all the attractions that she possesses, is the one upon which she bestows least pains. I have succeeded.

He is ill! and I cannot approach him—not watch over him!

He is better. Tears of anxious pain, tears of joy, which I was unable to keep back—ye have betrayed me! But thou, Camilla, dost thou think that thy paleness, thy red eyes, have remained unobserved? —————

He entered; we suspected it not; he seized our hands—thanked us for our anxiety, our sympathy. What I did I know not; but Camilla saw that I trembled. —————

Yes, I will hence—to hide myself from him, from the whole world, from myself! —————

I am again in my former home. It is better for me here,—I fancy that here I am stronger. —————

He must know it—he has seen that which he is to me. And then? Should he know it always. He would not boast of it in vanity—for that he is too great, too noble! He would mourn over me; his pity would not be heavy to me to bear, like the pity of the world. I should regard it like the compassion of a higher spirit, which looked down upon a weaker being. —————

Wherefore comes he to visit our joyless house, to enliven it with his presence? It is done from compassion for me;—does he think that I could not live without his glance? Oh, he deceives himself! Life can as it were nourish itself with renunciations. —————

Or perhaps he foresees that when he is separated from me I shall find myself doubly solitary, and seeks now to strengthen my soul, that I may bear it? Therefore he comes again—therefore he speaks—in order to raise me to the strength of mind, to the repose which he himself possesses. —————

Therefore he exercises my voice, encourages me to cultivate my understanding, to seek for knowledge. But in my condition that is impossible; and besides this, how would it benefit me—would it make me happier? —————

Yes; I understand him and his angelic goodness. He has seen that he also was appointed by heaven to strike a wound into my heart; he knows it, and seeks to prepare me for it; he would, if possible, alleviate it, make it imper-

ceptible ; he will divert my thoughts, will prepare pleasure for me—ah ! he knows me not !

He is too good ! It seems to me as if he pressed the dagger only deeper into my heart ; but he knows what is best for me—and I kiss the hand which gives me death !

Ah, why so much kindness to-day, if he will set off to-morrow ?

He has asked my hand—heavenly powers ! He and—I !

I have refused his hand, with thankful words ; but decidedly have I refused his hand ! My heart beats with pain and proud delight ! I have refused it, because I love him better than I love myself ; his happiness I prefer to mine a thousand times, and could give him no greater proof of this, than that I would preserve him from a wife who is not in a condition to make him happy. Ah, I must weep !

Would not death by the side of life throw over this its dark shadow ? I will be just towards myself. I am not in everything unworthy of his choice. My life, my heart, are pure—and this heart loves him ;—my soul glows for truth and virtue—I am not conscious of one mean feeling—but ah, for the rest how little am I formed to beautify his noble life ! My outward youth is vanished, still more so my inward. This spring of the soul, which sometimes, however, can recal the early withered flowers of the other. All my eager lively talents are chilled and dead. It is always to me as if there rested a heavy, stiff, iron hand upon my breast. I have felt too deeply the desolate emptiness, the gloomy melancholy of life. The bitterness of certain moments will never leave my memory. Never shall I regain that mood of mind, that freedom from care, which causes one to laugh so heartily—to be joyful—in one word, to forget the future in the present hour. How bitterly should I have felt by his side—adoring him as I now do—my inability to give and to receive pleasure. I should, like Abbadona, feel my inward darkness, and thereby become still darker.

My health is weakened, and I greatly err if my chest is not affected.

Besides, what should I be in those circles where rank, mind, and talents, as well as his own inclination, call him, with my small education, my wholly inward poverty, my want of agreeable properties;—a despised nullity, and a being whose audacious pretensions would there, where she is not in her place, make her appear with justice an object of ridicule. A wife without charms, sickly, melancholy, and who, because she felt all this, became thereby yet more dejected; that would be the sweet reward which fortune would have given for his magnanimity; that would be the only comfort for his pains, for the enlivening and joy of his life! Ah, he would hundreds of times repent his choice in his own heart! And the kinder, the more considerate he might have been towards me, for that reason should I have been all the more unhappy. Yes; I feel that, pressed to his heart, out of the very despair of not being able to make him happy, I might have murdered myself. Oh that thou whom I so inwardly, so infinitely love, couldst but read my heart! Would that my constant, my warm prayer might call down upon thee that happiness which I cannot give thee!

He has never loved me; no spark of love conducted him to me; only for a moment could I deceive myself in that respect—the dream vanished—all became clear—I saw what I had to do—and God and my love lent me strength to act properly.

It was only noble, heavenly compassion which led him to me—only goodness,—it deserved to be rewarded! A sweet, proud feeling overpowers my heart, when I think, “The noblest man would have raised me up to himself,” and I have treated him worthily! Yes; he has raised me!

I cherish in me the belief, that the charming Camilla will, at one time, vouchsafe to him all that which it was not in my power to give. Pale, trembling Camilla! perhaps very soon will the flowers of joy and love glow upon thy gentle cheeks. Thou never shalt learn for what thou hast to thank me. And thou, Alfred, when the joy of heaven swells in thy noble breast, thou wilt no longer think of me; but I—I will think on thee.

And when I have finished my laborious course through life, may I then be able to say, “I have made two human beings happy!”

I see him no longer. How dark is everything around me here! but I have willed it—and I am contented.

My thoughts accompany him with benedictory wishes—day and night, in the morning as in the evening, accompany him.

My presentiment is about being fulfilled. Camilla is Alfred's happy bride. How will her lovely intellectual eyes beam! Oh may they be happy! Hear me, Giver of all felicity—no supplication for myself shall longer weary thy goodness—but make them happy—take everything which I might yet have—ah, take my soul—and give, give to them all!

Let Camilla love him, even as I love him.

The bells ring! the bells ring! the great day is arrived—Alfred leads Camilla to the altar. How noble, how handsome he is! How lovely, how charming she—how happy they both appear to be! “A noble pair,” whispered the people—did I hear it—or have I read it somewhere? I do not know. The day is beautiful—the spring-sun warm and bright. All is bright and peaceful, my mind also—I am happy and cheerful! No, it is not fever which colours my cheeks so crimson—it is joy—it excites my pulse—it makes my heart beat a hundred in a minute—hark! the bells ring. It is done; the clergyman has blessed them—and I too.

Now I am tranquil and alone, and quiet as the night, which reposes on all things; I pray in my heart for the happiness of those whom I so infinitely love. All that Providence does is good, is well—even pain has its repose, its end—my pain also will find this in his happiness; for which I in a courageous moment laid the foundation. Oh, beloved of my heart, I believe, I know, that through thy happiness, I also shall be happy. When the sun of thy joy beams in its full splendid midsummer glory, its warmth will also reach to me, the one hidden in shade. I will be the distant echo of thy song of joy! Feel and call thyself happy—and—I also will be happy—be joyful! and I also am—joyful; smile! and also I smile; thank God! and also I thank God; thank him inwardly.

(Poor fanatic! thy wings seem not longer to have sustained

thee. Under a later date, I find in the same hand which wrote the above in joy, the following words, the expressions of a quiet but broken spirit.)

My life is a feverish dream !

January 2nd.

A better world—my most beautiful, my only hope!

(Years seem now to have passed on in which nothing is indicated; but from that which next follows, and with which a new epoch seems to have begun in the life of the Solitary, one may conclude that the angel of peace—whose palms, sooner or later, wave around the good, innocent sufferer—came nearer to her heart.)

An infinitely sweet something has sunk into my heart. I know not what sentiment of peace, nay, of cheerfulness, attends me in my quiet wandering through the vale of life. And yet everything around me here is unchanged, is cold; without joy, without love, as before. The change has taken place in myself. I expected my happiness from the world—and man; I was deceived, wounded and repelled; now I have alone turned myself to God, and begin to feel—that His peace is higher, greater than all the joy of the world.

A beautiful hyacinth, which blooms in my window, awoke in me cheerful feelings and thoughts. I see how it, unconsciously paying homage to the light and warmth, by degrees turns to the sun. The sun in return beams brightly upon it; opens, still operating, flower upon flower; lends to it colour, beauty, and fragrant odour. This to me is a clear image of the human and the divine. Eternal sun of love! I will, like the flower, humbly turn to thy light, in order to receive life and joy from thee, which thou alone canst give.

I come from church. I have wept much, and am yet become happier. The feeling of devotion is one of the most beautiful, most elevating, which we can experience upon earth. It is not joy, not sorrow, but something that raises us above both—it is a momentary return of the soul to its

true native home—a feeling which, more than every deep-thinking demonstration, convinces me that we are children of immortality.

The text was taken from the Woman of Canaan. The preacher took occasion therefore to represent how bread is often withheld from us that we may learn to satisfy ourselves with the crumbs—and how a submissive and flexible spirit is productive of happiness to its possessor, and well-pleasing to God. It seemed to me as if all this was emphatically spoken alone to me, and I acknowledged it as truth in my heart. Ah, this restless heart, that has desired with impatience so much from the world and from man, that wished so ardently to possess all the good things of life, how it has been obliged to give up its wishes! It has, by degrees, learned to please itself with the crumbs; but it is also humble, patient—and as I hope has become better—and now first it enjoys the peace, the joy, after which it has striven so long, but in the wrong way. A flower, a bright day, an unexpected kind word—a lovely dream, a feeling of satisfaction, yes! a thousand little enjoyments, formerly not regarded by me, of which even the life most wanting in joy is not wholly deprived—are now infinitely dear to me. I have by little and little learned to see how the true wisdom of human life consists in this, that it, like the bee, knows how to suck a drop of honey out of the smallest flower.

And if thou, lofty Director of my destiny, hast left me thus solitary upon earth for this purpose, that I may turn myself wholly to thee, and in thee find my all—have I then, indeed, ground for complaint? If thou, All-merciful, wilt be to me father and mother, brother and sister, must not I then consider myself as blessed?

Why, ah why, have I not earlier sought my peace where I could alone find it? How many years of pain and depression might have been spared to me, if I had earlier known how foolish it is to turn oneself for comfort and joy to the world and man.

Give, thou solitary forsaken one, thy heart to God; but with that deep serious will, which allows of no wavering, no return, no weakness. Learn to say, “Thy will be done, O

Father!"—not merely with submission, but with love, with joy; and all despair, all depressing, hopeless pain, will for ever have vanished from thee!

When I in the evening lay myself down to rest, and the fatigues of the day and the unkind treatment of those on whom I am dependent have depressed my mind, I begin to pray "My Father!"—but scarcely have I said these words, scarcely has the feeling of their meaning penetrated my soul, than I weep the sweetest tears, and an infinite blessedness overcomes my whole being. My whole prayer then often consists of "My Father!" which I repeat many times; for they contain, as I feel them, everything which I can express of childlike love, of inward confidence, of submissive hope, of devotional joy. Amid such feelings I fall calmly asleep—and is it then indeed to be wondered at, if I believe myself cradled by the songs of angels?

Yes, I believe it—I must believe it—there is a comfort for everything. There are beings more unfortunate than I have been, although the sensibility of my heart has increased suffering a thousand-fold for me. There is, for example, the neglected invalid, consumed by pain; the captive, without hope of deliverance, of whose only joy—a spider—an inhuman hand has deprived him. But could not they also look up to God, and say "Our Father!" And the criminal, who has deserved his sufferings—who is more unfortunate than he? But if he feel repentance he may be forgiven—the prodigal son can arise and go to his Father. Can the child of an eternally good Father ever, indeed, feel despair? Ah! He who taught us to call God our Father, He alone knew the human heart, and knew how to give to it a never-failing consolation!

The dead have comforted the mortal; and the voices which have exclaimed, "We suffer!" have also exclaimed, "We are comforted!" The Gospel is spread out to the human race, and has opened heaven to it; but a murmuring, dissatisfied heart knows it not.

But the vicious—the debased into animal rudeness—the millions who live in darkness, in the night of misery and of ignorance? Friendly stars! ye who shine so brightly—mystic lights of heaven, full of hope I glance up to you. Ye

are worlds for hope—I regard ye as higher schools of education for the unhappy children of earth! Yes, confidently may one hope, God is indeed so all-good!

If our faith is firm, and our hope secured with a sure anchor, then is much won for our peace, and, in particular, heaven stands clear in our future; but, nevertheless, our hearts may still suffer much, and the burden of the day still appear intolerable, let human wisdom help it as it may. Defend us from discouragement—from the phantasmagoria of the imagination; and let us seek, every one for himself, the diversion of mind, the available little joys and springs of comfort, which lie so near to us, if we only look out for them. The great object is to preserve oneself good and pure, and then to suffer as little as possible. The means for that purpose are for all equally alike as different; but no one will miss them who has only his eyes open to see them.

Mercifully to direct the blind to them, ought to be the business of those whose lot it is on earth, so to say, to be eyes to the human race, to see for them and to teach them to see. Oh ye wise, ye noble and enlightened of the earth, be less of our schoolmasters, be more our comforters! Show us the mysteries of consolation—give light to pain—teach every one how in his outward condition, and according to the nature of his inward, he may find alleviation for his sufferings! Noble physician of the soul, grow not weary in seeking out remedies for all her maladies! How many blessings then will follow your footsteps, your divine labours!

The years which I formerly found so long, now pass on rapidly as swallows, because the days no longer appear burdensome to me—because no hour of the day passes over without affording to me a cheering, enlivening feeling. This hourly, this to me principal comfort, I have found in prayer, in a constant remembrance of the presence of the Highest of Beings. I live and act always under the eyes of a father; and as I feel that I live, I feel and know also that his eye follows me, that his spirit is near to me, surrounds me with his peace, and infuses a joy into me which I may indeed feel but cannot describe.

I regarded myself formerly, by virtue of my position, as

wholly useless in the world. Experience, to me dear experience, has taught me—that if we work, in the small sphere which has been confided to us, only with truth and care, that we shall operate and labour according to the regulation which is the foundation of all good; and that pleasant consequences will sooner or later arise to us therefrom.

My health fails. The fulfilment of my duties in the family which has adopted me, becomes to me more difficult every day; but I endeavour to fulfil them according to the best of my powers. My heart has peace, is cheerful and quiet.

“Do not sit idly there, and do not look so happy, whilst I go about to seek for my snuff-box!” said the angry Countess to me just now. I recollect a time when I received reproaches on account of my downward devotional looks. Now my heart is so joyous that my countenance often receives the impression of it. Neither was the displeasure of the Countess at this time wholly without foundation; because, whilst one must take heed not to disturb the peace of others by an evidence of our own disquiet, one must not the less avoid showing a satisfaction which may make a painful impression upon those to whom this feeling is a stranger.

I have again seen—him—her, have pressed their children to my heart! This family is an image of felicity. The happy husband and wife scarcely recognised me. That was not singular—I am so changed. I cherish in myself a wish—a fanciful hope—which I will not chase away—the hope of being able soon to float invisibly around them, and watch over their happiness.

How beautiful is the look of a man who labours with his full powers and in a sphere where his abilities freely exercise themselves, and still rise higher by the labour—and where he is conscious that he lives for the benefit of his country, that he is esteemed by his fellow-citizens, loved by wife and friends, worshipped by his children—that is the look of Alfred! How charming and touching is the expression in the countenance of a woman where all the requirements of her loving heart have been fulfilled, who lives in and for her

beloved—that is the expression of Camilla's face. And you happy little ones—you children, you darlings, one sees in your eyes full of innocence and joy of life, who brightly—the heaven of your childhood shines!

“In the autumn—when the leaves fall!” said a physician to-day, half aloud to the Countess, after he had observed me with thoughtful mien, and had inquired after my health. This termination of life sounds quite romantic—but yet my life has had very little resemblance to a romance. Well then—in autumn!—in autumn. An aspen-leaf, which has trembled in the waving of so many winds—will tremble no longer!

I make use of a remedy for my chest—may it or may it not be beneficial—I am calm; formerly I wished to die—now I wish it less, since I have learned better to support and employ life. I have learned to worship God in all his works. There is nothing, be it small as it may, to which a great thought does not in some way unite itself—and which thereby does not become important and interesting.

The leaves fall—and I still live—and still lift joyfully my eyes to the gloomy heavens.

I have great bodily pain—and yet suffer so little—my soul is so happy!

“In spring—when the leaves shoot!”—says the physician now. And I should almost believe it, if I ventured to listen to the quiet presentiment which abides in me, and which whispers to me; in spring, when everything awakens to life and to joy, when the flowers send forth from opened cups their fragrant odour to heaven—then will my emancipated spirit float forth and feel the air of the eternal spring; then will my yearning have reached its dimly divined of goal.

He is come to me with his wife, yet once more to see me—that was noble and kind of him. I found him changed. A dark fire was in his eye, and wrinkles which resembled those of discontent showed themselves sometimes on his brow, that formerly was so clear and smooth. Ah, ambition has crept into his heart!—this, together with his talents, has lifted him upon eagle-pinions to the height of worldly great-

ness. He is become a great man, but has ceased to be happy. His amiable wife looked dejected, and the most careful toilet could not conceal the change in her melancholy countenance. It grieved me to see her; ah, that they were but as happy and tranquil as I!

I am almost forty years of age. As solitary as I lay in my cradle, thus solitary stand I yet on the edge of the grave. I have gone through life like a shadow, and my life has been like a shade. More and more it vanishes from my eyes; but the Eternal Father, whose will I have obeyed, opened to me a new, a glorious life, to which I advance with indescribable joy! The beneficial prayers which I send forth, and which I feel will be heard—the feeling of a presentiment of heaven, that feeling of angelic peace which has accompanied me—the tranquillity which no pain is able to disturb—the delicious emotions of joy—the pleasurable tears which I often shed—oh, those dear holy messengers!—what do they announce to me other than that I soon shall behold the image of all love, of all perfection—that the yearning spark will soon unite itself with the sacred fire from which it is sprung!

Here the feeble hand ceased to guide the pen—the heart which had throbbed so long with love and pain now reposes.

The Solitary is gone home to her Father—she is now happy!

THE COMFORTER.

WHO that has suffered—that has, in moments of deep and dark pain, found in his heart a world of misery, and then felt the necessity, cherished the heartfelt wish, to be comforted by a being from a higher world—has not, at times, hoped in enthusiastic melancholy to see an angel come down, who with merciful healing hand would touch the wounded heart, and solve the dark riddle of life and suffering?

Oh, when nature smiles around us in her glorious garment of summer—when she, like an enchanting beloved one—affectionate, beaming, warm, embraces with pure joy man, her bridegroom—then, if the human heart remain cold and reserved, and solemn as the grave;—if it alone cannot mingle its voice in the jubilant chorus of the earth—if man fancy himself to be the only repulsed one—how good were it then if a voice from heaven whispered this declaration to the unhappy one, “Thou also art beloved! Son of suffering, endure with patience; thou also shalt one time drink from the cup of happiness!”

Ye bitter sufferings, inconsolable sorrow, despair—I have known ye! Heavenly voice, full of mercy and comfort, I have heard thee, and shall never forget thee. Yet to-day callest thou to me from the world of spirits. My soul hears thee, my heart understands thee! At this moment, in which memory has opened the leaves of my book of life, and my pen will recal the remembrance of long flown times, the still night has laid all around me to rest. I am alone, awake, and with me it is suffering which dissipates repose. The pale light of my lamp makes me aware of the shadow of a fearful form upon the wall near me, which reminds me of that which legends ascribe to the gnomes, those children of dust and of darkness. This horrible shape is my own—is my body. And this, so deformed, so heavily afflicted body is united to a soul

which adores the beautiful in the inward being, as well as in the outward form.

Alone with myself and my shadow, surrounded by night and silence, I yet feel the smile float upon my lips—I listen with quiet joy to the harmonious voices which rise up from the depths of my soul in humble offerings of praise to heaven; and I can only compare the delightful, clear peace which encompasses my soul, with the gentle moonlight that at this moment spreads itself over the moss-roses in my window.

There was a time when everything in me was quite otherwise, in which I hated the world and myself; in which I wished that I had never been born.

In the May of life, during those days of spring in which the whole of organised nature, every created existence, becomes partaker of some drops of joy; in which gentle pinions rock mankind, and heaven vaults itself so loftily and brightly above us—at that time I became acquainted with misfortune, and bitter were then my complaints.

It was in my drooping soul, as in the outward world, when, in our northern climate, the days towards winter rapidly decrease, the nights become longer, and the sun, like a dying one, seems only to rise, to say farewell, and then to sink again. I cherished not the hope that a new year would alter for me the course of things; on the contrary, I saw behind the decreasing light a night becoming ever more and more dark, spreading itself over all.

Happy are the dead; they suffer no longer! Happier still are the unborn, who have never suffered! Happy also are you, ye pitied fools; ye who laugh at your misery; ye who plait for yourselves crowns from your straw couches; ye who dream that ye are great and happy. Ye are pitied unjustly! Ah, ye feel, indeed, nothing, and your misfortune is concealed by the flowers of your madness. Happy are ye!

Thus thought I, thus complained I, as one evening I dragged myself along with slow steps, in one of the darkest alleys of the park on the estate of my parents.

I was young and unhappy, and never—no, never—can one feel misfortune so bitterly as in youth. In maturer years the feelings become blunted—the blood flows more tranquilly; one is already accustomed to suffering—the way is not then so long to the terminating goal of all suffering.

But when pain surprises us in youth, then that which is terrific in its novelty is increased by the yet uncurbed strength of the feelings by which that wild, fruitless struggle against fate is excited, whose consequences are hopelessness and despair.

Sickly and infirm at nineteen, I went through life timid and gloomy as an unblessed shade. I had been happy; therefore, I now suffered so much the more. I was full of life and health till my seventeenth year—and so beloved—and so happy! Then I felt myself good, found the world so beautiful, regarded mankind as angels, and God as the Father of all. A tedious illness threw me about this time upon the couch of suffering, from which I arose again disfigured in the most fearful manner. People pitied me at first; but soon they turned away from me—my mother also, my brothers and sisters, did so. My heart became bitter; I felt the deterioration of my mind, and began to think myself abandoned by God and man. The careful education, the fine accomplishments, which, in my younger years, had been my share, served now only to sharpen the sense of my misfortune. Never beat a heart in a human breast with more glowing love for freedom, activity, and the heroic virtues, which history displays in splendid prototypes. Never flamed more enthusiastically the spirit of emulation in the soul of a youth. Cato, Brutus, Scipio, Regulus, they were my prototypes—I wished to resemble them, if not to excel them all—and my name, like theirs, should be honoured by a noble posterity. Renown and joy, with a rich, virtuous, and useful life—that was the quickly vanished dream of my first youth.

Miserable compassion, contempt, forgetfulness—with a useless, sickly, joyless life—were the horrible realities which locked me in their iron arms on my awaking, which drew me down from my heaven, and darkened to me the whole world—and God, and his beautiful sun, and his mercy towards his creatures.

Doubt, with its murmuring never-answered questions, arose in my soul, and midnight darkness inclosed my uneasily throbbing heart. An unending pain agitated my breast, whilst the panting breath moved it up and down.

“How have I sinned that I should be so severely, so

fearfully punished—for what have I become so unhappy?" asked I, loudly murmuring, as with tearful eyes I looked around me on the blooming scenes which richly and beautifully surrounded me.

It was a gloriously fine evening. The sun was descending, all was tranquil—only a low murmur stole now and then, like a whispered declaration of love, between foliage and flowers through the wood. Everything seemed to rejoice—I alone suffered! I wished to be the bird which thoughtfully twittered, swinging upon the green branches—or the flower which beamed so splendidly, which gave forth such sweet odour—or the butterfly which rested in its bosom—nay, even the moss overgrown, happy, senseless rock against which I leaned;—only not man—only not the suffering, pitiable human being which I was!

I rested myself beside a lake which bounded the park, and which was encompassed by the most beautiful shores.

Oh how often had I formerly, with youthful pleasure and joy, guided my little boat over its dancing waves! How often had I, with my powerful arms, divided its gentle waters—kissed them with warm lips—and seen in the clear depths which mirrored back a cloudless heaven, the image of my pure heart, my fresh life! As formerly, still green, riant shores garlanded the quiet lake—as formerly, the dark blue of the heavens reflected itself in its depths—my boat lay on the shore—everything had remained so unchanged, so kindly unchanged! I only was no longer like myself, was no longer the same. I found everything here, excepting only myself.

I bowed myself down to touch the cool water with my glowing lips, but suddenly drew back at the sight of my own detestable image, which, like my demon of misfortune, raised itself towards me more terrific than ever from the dark depths. It was to me as if I had been stung by a snake.

With disordered and painful feelings, I fixed my stony gaze upon the opposite shore. Joyful human voices sounded thence; and I soon perceived how gay couples swung around in a merry midsummer dance. Songs and laughter echoed back from the rocks around. I arose, turned myself away, and went deeper into the wood.

Through the opening of an avenue shone opposite to me the brilliantly-illuminated windows of the castle of my parents.

They held there that night a festival to celebrate the return of my eldest sister to the paternal house. She had left it in her childhood, in order to be brought up by near relations in the capital; and now returned back an amiable bride, and was received by festivities which I now escaped as earnestly as I formerly had sought them.

"Nobody will miss me, nobody will think about me," thought I, with bitter feelings, as I went away to seek for darkness and quiet. "Parents, brothers and sisters, make yourselves happy—dance—sing! I shall never more sing, never more dance, never more laugh!"

Music now resounded from the castle, and brought to me the bewitching tones of my favourite waltz—the joyous voices from the shore became louder and louder—I went, and went, and went—they pursued me. Oh all ye unfortunate friends, ye who like me have felt yourselves without joy, without hope in the world—was it not then, during the innocent joy of others, that envy and bitter chagrin crept into your hearts? If it be painful to suffer undeservedly, then it is doubly painful to be obliged to say that one has deserved it, when one, for the first time, detects in oneself an envious and disdainful state of mind. I cannot describe what a feeling of infinite pain overpowered for some moments my whole being. My whole power was concentrated upon one point—upon the consciousness of my suffering. It was intolerable to me. "Oh, my God! comfort me, comfort me!" exclaimed I many times with a hollow voice, before which I myself shuddered. "If thou be the God of mercy, then pity thou thy suffering child! Give me again that which thou hast taken from me; or open thy heaven—send an angel to me, an angel which shall tell me why I suffer—or annihilate me! I am a grain of dust before thee—mingle me with the dust—only cause that I cease to feel, to suffer!" This wild, incoherent prayer—ah, I felt it—was only an audacious, bitter murmur. I should have thrown from me at this moment every earthly consolation; I should not have received them. An angel's voice alone, an immediate revelation, would only, so I imagined, give me tranquillity—could only give me back my extinguished hope, my faith on that which once had been so sacred, so certain, and so clear, and which now to my feeling, unstable and wrapped in darkness, left me without any support.

Every one who, like me, has been suddenly and unexpectedly plunged into the depths of misfortune, will feel with me. People could not be so unhappy if, with the loss of all earthly hopes, they did not also often lose faith in a wise and merciful God. That gracious voice which exclaimed to us that not a sparrow, much less one of us, falls unobserved to the earth—that the hairs of our head are all numbered—this voice is not perceived in the tempest of passions—and if even it do find a way to our breast, it is not always able to silence the excited waves—for that wild, impatient heart desires then an instantaneous effect to prove its truth—and if in our murmuring no consolatory feeling descends into our tumultuous heart—if our fate do not change, our sufferings remain the same—then we despair—then—ah, how unhappy are we then !

With eyes fixed on the night I went onward, and seemed to myself like a child of the night.

All at once as it were a hundred-weight fell upon my heart, that what I suffered, what I felt, might be only a repetition of that which others had felt and suffered before me. The bloody sweat of millions of human beings, the tears of millions, had moistened before me the path of pain upon which I wandered, and would moisten it after me ; and shuddering, I saw in thought, like ugly ghosts, darker than the night which encompassed me, all the sufferings and afflictions of the human race pass before me—the sufferings of the body, of the heart, of feeling, those never wearied harpies, which leave not the unfortunate, until he has, brother-like, extended his hand as a skeleton to death—and in my own name, and that of all sufferers, I lifted up a piercing, painful, murmuring cry, and directed my eyes lamentingly to the stars. In tranquil, undisturbed majesty, they stood clearly sparkling above my head, and this immovable order, this eternally unshaken repose of heaven, awoke in my breast ice-cold despair. “Let us die!” exclaimed I in thought to my brethren in misfortune—“let us die—then all is at an end—we have no compassionate Father in heaven !”

I had seated myself, and felt with gloomy satisfaction how the dampness of the night penetrated my dress ;—I hoped that it would undermine my enfeebled health—and my only wish now was for death. Whether it would conduct me now

to a more friendly fate, or only annihilate my afflicted being, it was welcome to me, dear to me, and inwardly longed for by me. Nobody would weep for me—all my family would, like myself, regard my death as a gain. I knew it, knew it only too well!

Towards midnight the music was silent, and I heard how the dancers on the shore departed by degrees, amid cheerful sounds. All at length was still. It had become dark, and the stars, whose glittering pomp had seemed to mock my pain, were wrapped in clouds. The whole country lay hidden in deep night, and at a distance the thunder was heard to roll. All this accorded more with my inward feeling, and did me infinite good. I threw myself down upon the ground, and wept bitterly. I wept long, and felt thereby a beneficial alleviation. Gentler feelings pressed into my heart, and combated against the bitter ones. The thoughts so precious to me of a reward on the other side of life, for sufferings patiently endured, of a wise, all-compassionate Father, came again and again. I was now able to pray to him with a submissive heart. I prayed—prayed for consolation—for light and strength, with that fervent, nameless prayer, whose strength opens heaven, and seems able to press with the sighs of the heart, to the throne of the Eternal. I had, whilst I prayed, raised myself up, but soon sank down again to the earth, enfeebled by my feelings and by pain, deprived even as much of thought as of power, and dull tones of lamentation laboured forth from my panting breast.

The night was warm, and so tranquil that no breath of air was sent forth; yet it seemed to me at times as if a trembling passed through the leaves of the poplar under which I lay, with my face to the earth, and each time an involuntary shudder passed through me. Three times it seemed to me as if a hand passed over my head lightly and caressingly, and with the pleasant sensation which I perceived therefrom, a delightful remembrance of my childhood livingly awoke within me. So had Maria, the little beloved one of my childish years, caressed me, when we, fatigued by sport and exercise, rested upon the soft grass together. I had perceived this sensation, when the little one raised her feeble hand from her death-bed, and laid it, for then she could no longer speak, as it were in blessing on my head.

Was she near to me at this moment? Was she, the glorified angel of earth, sent by the All-merciful to comfort me? Oh, how my heart beat as these thoughts arose in my soul!

I believed with certainty that something supernatural was near me, but, although the hair of my head rose upright, yet my heart felt no fear. What, indeed, does one fear when one is deeply wretched? Nay, even the most gloomy revelations of the spiritual world terrify no longer. The feelings of horror which they infuse are welcome; they refresh—they raise us above earthly pain, and seem less horrible than this. It is, however, a consolation which, as we believe, approaches us in a beloved shape from that unknown land at whose portals all lights of the human spirit are extinguished—therefore all becomes tranquil in the tumultuous breast, and all the pulses beat in adoring expectation. Thus operated in my soul the thought of Maria's presence. I called her softly by name—besought her to lay her hand upon my heart—and amid feelings of peace and sweet repose, such as I had never felt before, I fell into a kind of dreaming stupefaction. During this, it appeared to me that I saw Maria clothed in white, and indescribably beautiful, sit near me, in her hand a palm-branch with which she fanned me—whilst I, in no condition to speak or clearly to think, pleased myself for some moments only by the feeling, how well it was with me. All at once I perceived Maria seize me by the hand, and amid feelings of indescribable satisfaction I fancied myself floating away at her side over the earth towards heaven.

"I am dead!" thought I; and an unspeakable sensation of joy passed with the thought through my soul.

I wished to turn myself round, that I might yet once more behold this earth upon which I had suffered so much—but mists dimmed my view.

The clouds environed me ever more densely; I felt how the frosty damps chilled my breast, and dulled the glow which the restless beating of my heart had occasioned. "It is good!" thought I; "that is the enfolding of the grave, the embrace of death—how beautifully they cool! soon—soon shall I be transformed." Again it became dark to me, as if I were not yet dead, only dying. My mind became every moment more benumbed; it became ever darker and darker before my eyes—a dull soughing, as of distant woods,

was in my ears. Yet clearly and calmly remained to me the consciousness of a guiding hand, even in the moments in which I entirely seemed to lose the consciousness of my own existence.

A sudden feeling of pain, which thrilled through my heart like a dagger-stroke, recalled me to thought and consciousness. I found myself lying upon the earth as shortly before, and should have regarded all as merely a dream had I not still felt the soft, warm hand which inclosed mine. I was feeble and powerless. Without raising my head, I exclaimed, "Oh, Maria, why didst thou not take me up into thy bright home? Why am I yet upon earth, where people suffer so much and so hopelessly—why, ah, why must I still suffer?"

"God wills it," replied a voice, as charming and melodious as we represent to ourselves that of angels. Impatiently murmuring, I asked, "And to what purpose shall I live and suffer?"

"In order to be better thyself—to be useful to others."

"How can I, miserable worm, be useful to others?"

"Through thy patience—through the example of thy submission."

"Ah, I have strength to feel my suffering, but not to bear it!"

"Pray!"

"God's image is darkened in my heart—I cannot pray! I have seen the abyss of pain—have understood the sufferings of men—and I see—I understand God no more! Oh, be not angry, pure, holy angel! Thou who livest in light, look mercifully upon the son of darkness—enlighten me—comfort me!"

"Yes, I will comfort thee!"

"Tell me, compassionate angel, has the Eternal sent thee to me?"

"He has sent me to thee."

"His eye thus, then, sees the tormented worm creeping in the dust? The suffering creatures of the earth are not unobserved by Him?"

"He sees, he numbers them all."

"Oh, Maria! say, if God be all-good and merciful, wherefore all the wretchedness, all the sufferings of men?"

"It is sufficient for thee to know that he will afford comfort to all, and will sometime cause all suffering to cease."

"I cannot take hold on this comfort—I do not understand how happiness can ever outweigh pain. Happy angel—thou who wast already in childhood snatched away from the earth—thou hast never known its afflictions—thou understandest them not! Hear now one of its victims speak! Hear, and if thy incorporeal being can yet cherish human feelings—if this heart, familiar with the felicity of heaven, be not cold for foreign suffering—then shudder!" And from the depths of my agitated heart I exclaimed—"We suffer, we suffer! We call for help, and the earth opens her abysses, and heaven looks coldly down and despises us. The night of despair covers us—the vulture sits on our heart, and rends from it piece after piece—and gnaws and gnaws. We call on death, but death comes not. We curse our life—we blaspheme——" I paused, thrilled through with horror!

Everything was still for a moment, and I endeavoured, with a convulsive effort, to stupify my mind; for I dreaded to hear that scornful laughter, to see those dark abysses, to feel those pangs of agony.

"Listen!" said the angel-voice suddenly, strong and delicious as a harp-tone. "Listen to the song of victory from my lips, which the suffering children of earth will some time sing altogether in the bright heavens!" And I heard the angelic song, which sounded like a voice out of the clouds, and yet quite near to me.

Oh thou human anguish
Thy abode was brief!
Heart, enfranchised captive,
What a blest relief,
By suffering purified,
Now to God allied!

To the bright blue heaven,
From the vale of care,
Let thine eye be given,
Think not on despair!
See above, in brightness,
The dwelling of uprightness!

Though our life's track leads us
Through a foreign land,
'Tis but the course that speeds us
To the bright world's strand,
And afar off, we
The Father's house can see.

There our hopes were tending,
 Amid storm and fear;
 Blessedness unending
 Now surrounds us here.
 The appointed goal is gained,
 The victory is obtained!
 Never more in sadness
 Shall we look to heaven,
 Spring's eternal gladness
 To our hearts is given;
 And like the saints above,
 Henceforth our life is love!
 Here no mist surroundeth,
 Error all is o'er;
 Word of doubt confoundeth
 Our weak faith no more,
 For truth so pure, so clear,
 Shines only here!

The song ceased, but I fancied I still heard it. The pain also in my soul ceased. I felt how every bitter feeling within me dissolved itself by degrees, and gave place to gentle, consolatory ones. Sweet tears ran down my cheeks, and a feeling like that of the peace just now sung, overcame for a moment my being. Soon, however, the torment woke again, and doubt raised itself again from the depths of my soul. I folded my hands and prayed, "Oh pitying, gentle angel, forgive my weakness—leave me not—continue to give my soul light! Tell me, what indeed is that for which we here struggle and suffer?"

"The right, the true life, of which this earthly life is only the shadow. An eternal mounting upwards, an eternal approach to God, the fountain of truth and bliss. That light, that peace, that sanctification and pure joy, which we here seek for in vain, we shall there find."

"Ah," I replied, gloomily, "night encompasses me—I cannot take hold on the light."

"Behold, the red of the morning breaks," cried the voice; "behold, how it diffuses light around us; how every object, which just now were yet veiled in nocturnal shadow, appears in brightness, beauty, and truth. Thus also on the morning of eternity will its sun diffuse light over all the perplexities of life—then wilt thou understand wherefore thou hast suffered; only continue good, only continue submissive—and all will be right. Son of suffering! thou also wilt one day drink from the cup of felicity!"

"And the poor tempted ones, they whom misfortune leads to crime, whom misfortune degrades—what fate may they expect?"

"God is merciful and just—adore him!"

"And the wicked—they whom a horrible destiny seems even from their cradle to have destined to be the scourge of their fellow-beings?"

The angel was silent a while, but at length said with a gentle, solemn seriousness, "Wherefore these questions, this disquiet, child of dust? There is a God—worship God!"

It became brighter in my soul. "Oh," said I softly, "I understand thee. God is God, and that says everything—my God also," added I, with deep and joyous feelings.

"And thy Father!" said the angelic voice.

"Yes—my Father—and a Father who pardons! Oh, Maria, tell me—if I, too weak to bear my burden, voluntarily laid down a life which I felt to be intolerable, would not this Father receive his unhappy child into his paternal bosom?"

"Do not mislead thyself," replied the voice; "he who gives way before the trial, can never deserve the reward. Oh, suffer with patience—hope with confidence! Deprive not thyself of the reward which awaits thee—of the well-pleasing of God, of the good pure witness of thine own conscience, of the blessings of those to whom thou canst be upon earth a support and a comfort."

"But if I see that I am a burden to others as to myself, if——"

"Do right and worship God," replied the voice, in a severe tone. I felt pain. At length I said, dejectedly, "Life is long, infinitely long, for the unhappy, who have on earth no other, better lot to expect; and the terminating goal of suffering appears to him too distant for it to operate as a constant alleviation of ever-returning pain. Thou, thou, in the enjoyment of ever-ascending happiness, measurest not, remarkest not, the course of the years; thou canst not think what an infinitude of duration the days, the hours, nay, even the minutes, have for the unfortunate, who counts his pangs by the beating of his pulse! If thou, heavenly comforter, wert ever near me, I would not complain; but when thou returnest to the bright home from which thou out of mercy hast descended, what will become of me? How shall I be

able to bear those long, long hours, which the united pains of the soul and the body make so insufferable?"

"I will not leave thee," replied the angel, whose voice was again infinitely soft and gentle; "I will assist thee to endure those hours, and to feel those pains less. God has strewn everywhere the seeds of consolation and joy; we will seek for them together. We will be submissive—and all will become good; we will be submissive—and peace will descend into our hearts. We will worship God together—together seek for the mitigation of thy pain; and if thou must weep, thou shalt no longer weep alone." At these words the voice of the angel became as it were stifled by emotion.

"Do the immortals also shed tears?" thought I; and amazed beyond all description, as well by the words as by the emotion that followed them, I raised myself up, and ventured for the first time to contemplate the white figure which sate at my side. Trembling I sought for the dear, well-known features of Maria; I found them not. A lovely, to me, strange countenance, veiled with compassionate tears, and brightened by the dawning crimson of the morning, bent over me, and a warm, soft, rosy mouth impressed upon my brow an affectionate kiss.

"Oh, my brother, my beloved brother!" whispered the same angelic voice which went so to my heart, "recognise thy sister, whom God has sent to thee to comfort and to love thee—who will never more leave thee!" and she threw her arms around me.

My bewilderment was so great, for a moment, that I fancied I had lost the use of my mind.

My sister endeavoured, in the most heartfelt affectionate manner, to overcome the excitement of my mind. She locked me in her arms, let my head rest upon her breast, and with sweet loving words she hushed to rest as it were my agitated feelings. I became by degrees calmer, but for a long time could not persuade myself that it was only my imagination, excited in the highest degree, which had made me fancy that an angel—yet what do I say—was it not an angel, although in a human form?—had been sent by God for my consolation! Yes, that was she, in the most beautiful signification of the word, and I felt it every moment deeper. In order to give my mind the most perfect clearness, she told me in a few

words the accident which had conducted her to me. Informed of my illness, of its consequences, and the unhappy state of my mind, which my gay and fortunate brothers had described as bordering upon insanity, she had, immediately on her arrival at the paternal home, inquired after me, and learnt that I, more gloomy than common, had gone into the park. As she, tolerably late at night, again inquired after me, and heard that I had not yet returned, this amiable sister, under the pretence of going to rest, stole away from the hall, and into the park, to seek out her afflicted brother. She was about to call my name, when my lamenting voice reached her ear, and guided her to the spot where I had sunk down overpowered by suffering, and almost insensible. She softly approached me, lingered quietly beside me, and heard how I called on the name of Maria, and besought her to comfort me; and her prudence and goodness suggested to her the thought of availing herself of this mistake, which my violently excited state of mind and my heated fancy had made, in order to afford me consolation in a manner which would make the greatest impression on my overstrained mind. Towards the conclusion of our conversation she thought that the human loving sister, deeply affected by my sufferings, would be more able to contribute to my comfort than one belonging to the world of spirits, and she let her feelings speak for me. "My brother"—thus she ended her explanation—"be not displeased because I was thy angel! Maria would, however, have left thee; and I will never, never more leave thee!"

I could not overcome my amazement. "And those oracular answers which thou gavest to me?"

"Thou wilt find their foundation in the Gospel—there is the fountain of comfort and of wisdom; we will together learn to gain them therefrom."

"And that charming consolatory hymn," I said, with tearful eye, "was it, then, only thy composition?"

"It was truth, which, although feebly composed, by me was put into the form in which thou now hast heard it. When we shall sometime hear, in a better world, the victorious songs of the suffering children of the earth, and shall even mingle our own voices in them—how different, my brother!—how altogether different will these harmonies

of eternity appear in comparison with feeble earthly tones ! Ye heavenly felicities, which no human eye has seen, no ear has perceived, which no human understanding can comprehend—how, indeed, could a mortal voice be worthy to sing ye ! Ye patient sufferers, it will sometime be your lot to do so !”

“Yes,” replied I, with emotion, “I may perhaps sometime unite my voice with these ; but thou, sister, wilt sing yet more beautiful among the happy ones arisen from the grave—happy on this and on the other side—thou angel of God !” My sister made no reply, but looked up to heaven with a glance, in which patient submission was so expressively depicted, as if she saw beforehand that severe fate would also strike her, and she offered up her own will as a sacrifice.

She took my arm within hers, and conducted me slowly back to the house. The ever-increasing daylight drove away the shadows from around ; morning breezes played in the foliage, and the most delicious twittering of birds raised itself in the fresh odoriferous air. All this appeared to me an image of that which occurred in my own soul. In my night-enwrapped mind light had also arisen ; I felt the gentle zephyrs of consolation, I heard the song of hope. Silently went on my sister and myself beside each other ; but her beaming glance, which now was riveted upon me, now passed over the enchanting objects which surrounded us, and then raised itself to heaven, seemed to invite my feelings to follow in its holy flight.

The first beams of the sun gilded the windows of the castle as we approached it—the same windows whose glittering illumination some hours before had made so painful an impression upon me. Now I contemplated them with quite different feelings ; and as I turned to the beaming torch of day, I repeated softly, with deep and delightful emotion, Thomson’s glorious prayer :

“Father of light and life ! thou Good Supreme !
Oh, teach me what is good ! teach me thyself !
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit ! and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss !”

I perceived the change within myself with rapture. The

nocturnal scene had made a deep impression upon me ; and however natural everything which had occurred might be, I still could not help ascribing it to a supernatural guidance. In the moment of pain and of despair I had called upon an angel, and an angel had descended to me with kind, long-wished-for words of consolation and hope. The voice of my glorified Maria could scarcely have produced a greater change in me than the voice of my gentle sister did.

She was one of those beings who only seem to linger upon the earth to alleviate its misery, and in whose pure soul heaven has stamped, as it were, its image. Gentle, lovely, wise, serious—she went through the world like a loftier spirit, who only takes part in life that it may sweeten the lives of others. She found her happiness only in the happiness of others ; and if she now felt the sufferings of others bitterly, it was because she kept her gaze too firmly fixed upon the terminal goal of the journey through life for her to permit the brightness of her mind to be gloomed by the difficulties of the way. And precisely this repose in her own soul enabled her, wisely and considerately, to select and apply the right method for the alleviation of every sorrow.

I soon perceived the beneficial influence of her gentle and prudent guidance. She did not permit my soul, after being elevated by its temporary flight, to sink back into cowardice, but maintained it upright, and sought to bring it into a state of tranquil, deliberate, and independent strength.

It was soon evident to her that ambition was my chief passion, and that the loss of all that could promise success to this passion was the principal cause of my deep melancholy. She judged wisely, that this passion, like all strong passions of the soul, could scarcely be speedily brought into subjection ; and endeavoured only to give it another direction, to set to it a better, nobler, less selfish, and to me a yet attainable object.

“Thou canst not,” said she once, in our confidential conversations, “become a Scipio, a Camillus, a Leonidas ; but thou mayst be a Socrates, a Plato, or, which is still better, one of those Apostles of Christianity, whose sacred and heroic virtues have deserved immortality on earth. Believe me, my brother, the world needs for its happiness more wise men than heroes ; and the happy, noble man, who has given

to humanity one comfort, one refreshment, may die with a more beautiful consciousness than that which sweetened the last hours of an Epaminondas. Thou hast received from nature remarkable gifts of mind, memory, acuteness; exercise and cultivate these. Thou hast knowledge—strive to acquire more and better solid knowledge. The field of mental cultivation is immeasurable, and the flowers which it bears are noble everlastings. The richer thy harvest becomes, the more thou garnerest that which is mature and solid, the more wilt thou be able to extend the fruit of thy labour to the greatly-needing hungry many, and wilt deserve the blessings of the present and future generations. Let us never forget, that what we undertake and accomplish, if it be actually good and beneficial, must be for the use of the kingdom of God.”

Thus spoke my good sister, less, as I believe, in the conviction of my ability to reach the prototypes which she presented to me, than to animate and inspire my sunken spirit.

In proportion as my earthly future opened itself again to me, my courage and my powers reawoke. The horizon expanded itself, as it were, before my gaze. Full of hope, I extended my arms towards the ascending sun, in which I now saw, as formerly, the image of light which would beam upon my earthly life.

I began to labour for my new object with all the zeal which my weak health allowed, and might perhaps have exerted myself beyond my powers, if my gentle and prudent sister had not here also stood by my side, watchfully and warningly.

She induced me to seek diversion of mind, and by agreeable light occupations or pastimes to cheer my spirits and to strengthen my powers. I had talent for drawing. She encouraged me to practise this beautiful, earnest art, which enables us to perpetuate beloved memories, and at the same time to forget the oppressive hours of the present. How often, when I endeavoured to trace her gentle features on paper, have I forgotten myself, the whole world, time, and everything which could fatigue or distress me, my whole soul now living with delight in my beloved work. How often, whilst I have been representing the attractive

and fresh objects of the country, the leafy trees, the calm lake, the bold heights, the shady valleys, the grazing herds, the clean turf-covered cottages, and the heavens veiled with transparent clouds, how often has the feeling of peace and quiet satisfaction penetrated my soul!

The great condition for that pure enjoyment is this, that the heart is free from every root of bitterness, every sentiment of ill-temper and envy; and in a short time, these disturbers of peace were entirely driven out of mine.

I had formerly read history with the same mind with which children see a magnificent spectacle, with admiration for the splendid and the great, without in any way as a whole connecting and embracing it. I read it again, after years, and still more, misfortune, had matured and formed my understanding, and found a totally different impression from this reading.

In contemplating the fate of the world, my own vanished from before my eyes. When my thoughts roamed through centuries, my lifetime seemed to lose itself in these, like a drop in the ocean—and when the misfortunes of millions lay open before my sight, I was ashamed of thinking on my own. I learned, in one word, to forget myself. And when my weak vision could perceive in these pictures of history only a confused swarming mass, when I lost there the traces of a wise and good Providence, when I saw upon earth only a disorderly succession of errors, confusion, and misery, then my sister turned my glance to heaven.

I looked up to heaven, listened to the voices of the good and holy upon earth, who—in combat, in pain, in death—have been raised with confidence, joy, and celestial power, to announce to us a higher aim than earthly happiness, another home, a higher light;—listened to the promises of immortality, and to the presentiments of it in my own breast, and learned to embrace in my heart the consolatory belief which already here in life diffused brightness over the darkest night.

I looked up to heaven. Light came from above. It beamed down into my soul. I comprehended that here below all things are only in the beginning, and full of hope; I cheerfully seized again my pilgrim-staff, composed as re-

garded my fate, and certain of my object. From this time my heart had continually peace; and it was not difficult for me to seek out many materials for happiness and joy, where-with I was enabled to build upon earth the cottage of my content. Among these, I have mentioned pleasant and diverting occupations, and I must yet add—society—not that on a great scale, to which I was still always opposed, and which, on account of my exterior, could only awaken unpleasant feelings, but that composed of my own family and my own friends, who did not alone endure me, but who endeavoured with kindness that I should, by degrees, find pleasure in their joy, and even learn to contribute to it—truly often enough, like a blind musician contributing to the pleasures of the dance.

My sister and myself took all possible pains to make my temper, violent by nature, mild and cheerful. She, by warnings, friendly counsels, but principally by her tenderness, her care to surround me with little pleasures, which nobody knew better how to arrange and to make piquant than she did; I, by watchfulness over myself, by representing all irritability and sensitiveness, and for the rest, by perfect submission to her guidance.

“Whoever,” said she, “is deprived of outward charms, and perpetually requires the attention and cherishing care of others, must labour still more than others to acquire that mild, kind, amiable temper and behaviour, which is alone sufficient to win the devotion of others—and which make all little attentions which are shown to them become so agreeable, all greater ones so light.”

I followed her counsel. I endeavoured to be amiable—I became beloved, and I deeply felt the happiness of being so.

The first great pain which befel me after my return to life and joy, was occasioned to me by her, who had formerly so affectionately consoled me. Ah! my angelically good sister was doomed, as she herself had divined, to experience herself on earth the bitterness of grief. He—who was worthy of her in every respect, and with whom she led an angel’s life—died suddenly, and her tender, only child followed him soon afterwards. As tranquilly and mildly as she had formerly

said to me—"Let us be submissive," she now repeated to herself these words—and was perfectly resigned. Kind and considerate for others as formerly, her bright peaceful eye was ever attentive to the wishes and necessities of others; but they remarked that something in her was changed—her joy was gone—she was in heaven. Her life on earth was now only a slow descent; not that of an extinguished flame, but of a descending sun, which, whilst with bright, although dying beams, he lets his farewell illumine this world, stands about to be reilluminated with new-born strength and purity in another.

She was no more!—and alone—and deserted by her—I feared for a long time to lose myself—but I soon felt that she and her consolations continued still in my heart my guardian angels. I collected my powers, and remained resigned to the will of heaven.

From the Eternal home, where she lives blessed and again united to her own, she casts sometimes, perhaps, a glance upon the grateful brother whose good angel she was on earth. Oh that this glance might never find me unworthy!—that this glance might not look down without pleasure into a purified and sanctified heart. My life has not come up to the splendid image which we beforehand conceived, I have become no Socrates nor Plato, but still am wise enough not to weep over it. We had—I in particular—had had quite too much confidence in the powers of my mind and my understanding. I soon observed that my ability to comprehend on a great scale, and to think, was very much confined. Something—I know not what it was—it seemed to me as if it were my own skull—presented to my thoughts, when they had arrived at a certain point, a wall which was to them as insurmountable as the walls of my room were to my feet; and my spirit was, alas! so constituted, that its flight rather led me into than out of the clouds. Thus I was also here obliged to give up my ambitious hopes, and found myself, when I, at length, had accustomed myself to fruitless combats and endeavours, only the better for it.

My sister had above all things turned my mind to religion; and this, which overcomes all human passions, poured her tranquillising balsam also over the waves of my ambition and

worldly vanity. And, in truth, if we acknowledge ourselves as work-tools in the hand of Providence, who has created us, how foolish it is then to wish to be anything different to that for which He has destined us !

When, therefore, I saw my inability to raise myself above mediocrity in the path of knowledge and of science—I ceased to strive after it, and calmly renounced a renown which was not destined for me. I employed, therefore, all the greater pains to enable that portion of myself, the perfection of which is impeded by no wall, by no “so far and no farther,” but to which, on the contrary, infinitude stands open. Every one who has earnestly begun this work will find that he creates his own happiness.

In the sphere which my inward eye can command, I endeavour so perfectly to comprehend all, so to profit by it and to employ it, that it actually may be advantageous to others and to myself. I am, according to my ability, active in outward life—and never do I alleviate a torment of the body or of the soul of a fellow-being without experiencing an increase in my happiness. When the infirmity of my body compels me to inactivity—I am quiet, and occupy my thoughts more exclusively with the beautiful future which religion has opened to us on the other side of the land of care. By my patience under suffering, and my, if not always merry, yet always friendly state of mind, I endeavour not to make unpleasant the attentions and care which people show to me, and in particular, make my brothers and sisters aware how easily a temper, cheerful and resigned through God, can bear outward adversity. They are kind and amiable, and—I know it, and say it with tears of joy—there is no one amongst them who would not willingly give up some of the days of his life to beautify mine. And yet I can give nothing more to them, than—my sincere friendship—do little more for them, than many a time to think for them—and always to feel with them. My sick-room is now their confessional, now their council-room, and often also their temple of joy ;—and when they are happy, they will just as willingly gladden me with the view of their happiness, as I will gladly see it, and take part in it.

The love of my parents is again given to me since I no

longer embitter their days by impatient murmuring over my fate. Ah, have I now, indeed, reason to complain of my fate. The heaven of my future stands brightly open there, and my present life is agreeable. I love still more virtuous and amiable people, sympathise in their fate, and am loved by them in return. I can do some good—my heart has peace—but all that I now am, all that I now say, that have I from thee, my good sister. Thou awokest me from the depths of despair, didst press me to thy loving breast—gave my soul comfort, my life courage—my powers a new object—my temper gentleness! When I cried to heaven to send me an angel, how mercifully was I heard! Thou didst come, my sister! Oh delightful comforter, gentle instructor!—although vanished from my sight, thou livest eternally in my heart; and every blessing, which I have from thee, I bring again to thee in humble gratitude!

A LETTER ABOUT SUPPERS.

Stockholm, November 20th, 1828.

BEST AMALIA!

Thou inquirest what I do in the great city of Stockholm, whilst the Parliament waves its strife-proclaiming banners, and whilst the wise and the unwise heads of the capital knock one against the other, and all the uninitiated expect to see the public good start forth from the mighty blow in a new-created Minerva-shape. Thou askest what I do during all this?—Ah, my love—I eat suppers, and yawn! The day before yesterday I was at a supper; yesterday, I was at a supper; to-night also shall be at a supper, and if I am still alive to-morrow, I shall, alas! also to-morrow eat a supper. “A supper!” I hear thee ask—“is there then anything so horrible in it?”

My Amalia, thou happy daughter of the country, remain with thy sewing and thy flowers—let the pure air kiss thy cheeks, sing thy simple songs, close thy day in peace and joy, eat thy frugal evening meal, go to bed at nine o’clock, thank God, and pray to Him that He may preserve thee from city life and suppers!

But if thou wilt become acquainted at a distance with these pleasures of the great and elegant world, then accompany me in spirit for a few minutes, and thou shalt be initiated into the mysteries of suppers.

We must adorn ourselves with flowers! Having been invited eight days ago to take part at the festival of pleasure, we must, in order to salute it, call up our freshest smiles!

The clock strikes eight. We leave the glass with a parting glance to ascend into the carriage which is standing ready, which rattling will convey us through the streets of the city to where the beaming blaze of light beckons to us from a long row of windows.

Not a word about disarranged curls, rumpled dresses, and

the thousand other little travelling discomforts. One must forget something. One gets all one's array again into the speediest order, and reassumes that becoming smile which one had left upon the steps.

The doors of the saloon are opened, and we float in. Is it the simoom or the sirocco which is wafted towards us from the throng of people and lights? One of the two it certainly is, and thou feelest already a universal drowsiness and disabling diffuse themselves over thy intellectual powers.

The greetings are over, we seat ourselves. God be thanked for good rest! If no earthquake happen, we shall not soon rise again. Closely seated together, the ladies mutually review each other—pay compliments, and say polite things to each other—drawing up their mouths the while as if they were sucking in Sugarland. The eyes twinkle, the heads are in motion, the feathers sway here and there, the silken dresses rustle; there is a greeting, a questioning and an answering; there is a murmuring and a bustling, becoming by degrees ever fainter and fainter, like a dying-away storm. The murmur ceases—it begins again—it dies out—and all becomes still.

They get the card-tables ready, carry tea about, exhibit engravings. People play and are silent—people blow and drink—people examine and yawn.

It is hot and sultry. Slowly creeps on the time. The heat of the rooms increases, curls become straight, certain noses become red, and ears burn, the eyes fill with tears;—one gets uneasy, one turns oneself hither and thither, one puffs and plagues oneself.

People try to begin a conversation. Bubbling ideas might enliven one's languishing feelings like fresh springs of water; but ah! ideas have gone out of our heads like the pomatum out of the hair, and we find ourselves hardly witty and clever enough to talk rationally about the weather. And if thou do exert thyself sufficiently to say something particular, thou wilt receive for thy answer a polite "Yes," or "No," or "Hum," or "Indeed!" which will as much as say, "My good one, do not give yourself any trouble!"

See, there now approaches thee a gentleman with a hat in his hand, in order to make some diversion in the entertainment. What does he say to thee? Thou smilest really so

gently. Was it something civil? "No." Something witty? "No." Something stupid? "No." Well, was it something, then? "Yes, but something which was absolutely nothing. The poor fellow, he was rather sleepy, had lost at the card-table; and was, moreover, under the influence of the supper-sirocco. What then, indeed, could he say other than—it is terribly warm here!"

In order to awaken thy own sense, which is slumberous against thy will, thou lookest about in the numerous company to find some amusement in the remarks which thou canst make. In vain! everything is so uniform. Good ton and refined education have so polished and trimmed, have so far removed all marked form, all originality, that one is aware of no other difference in these individuals than the trifles which show themselves in dress, and those which merciful nature, that enemy of melancholy uniformity, always knows how to preserve between nose, mouth, eyes, etc.—but this is all.

They carry about ices and confectionery. Some refreshment is perceptible in the room and the senses. People stick their teaspoons into their mouths, and enjoy, and are silent.

In the side-rooms one perceives the noise of the trumps which are struck by the players on the table. The company in the saloon sets itself now in motion—people turn themselves round—people rise up—they set down the little plates—they draw breath.

The piano is opened. Good. The magic tones of music will probably put to flight the demons of ennui. They thrust in a half-timid, half-bold lover of music, that he may play. He asserts that he cannot, but still seats himself at the instrument. He reddens, he turns pale, he trembles, but strikes forcibly upon the patient keys, and accords them to a song. Now, thank God that it is ended, and has not gone off worse.

Real talent after this makes itself heard, unpretending but calm in the consciousness of its power. They are songs from Frithiof which are sung. Music, poetry, both are beautiful. The voice of the singer is certain and agreeable, although the heat and the crowd of people in the little room take away from its tone. The last accord has sounded—why this silence

in the company, this immovableness—is it delight, rapture, inspiration? Repressed yawns and sleepy eyes make answer. The singer has sung to the walls. The supper-sirocco had disabled all feeling.

Dimmer and dimmer burn the lights, the heat becomes more oppressive, the air more sultry. People feel that they are just about to sink into dull unconsciousness; people compel themselves to be merry; they talk about fashions, dinners, members of parliament, and so on; one tries to squeeze it out of oneself; one overdoes it; one tells lies; one speaks slander, compelled by necessity, and in anxiety to say something, however—and wishes oneself afar off.

But slowly wear away the hours, the minutes stretch and expand themselves in the same way. One feels the need of doing so oneself.

Yet once more one contemplates the engravings, but takes them in one's hand upside down. One still talks, but says yes instead of no, and no instead of yes; one suppresses yawns at the risk of being choked; one feels oneself weariful, other people intolerable; but one still keeps on simpering and smiling kindly.

From eight to nine—from nine to ten—from ten to eleven—from eleven to twelve, have we sate quietly and patiently in this little hell of heat and courtesy.

Our strength is at an end, midnight has struck, and now certainly people would either fall into a fainting fit or die; but the doors of the eating-room are opened, odours of eatables operate like eau-de-Cologne upon our nerves—a voice proclaims, “It is served”—and people are saved!

The company rise hastily, and in a mass. They go out in couples, or one after the other, into the eating-hall, where an immeasurable table, a new land of Canaan, offers all dainty gifts of plenty and of luxury to the fainting wanderers coming out of the wilderness.

People troop about the table; people throng together; each chooses a place for himself; this one will not sit by that; that one will not sit by this. At last they are seated.

Now goes on the eating with the greatest and most earnest zeal. People eat and eat and eat. People feel a desperate desire by anything of activity to indemnify themselves for

the long inactivity and tedium to which they have been subjected, and they seize upon the only one which offers itself. One eats till one is satisfied, more than satisfied; but one still eats on with unalterable zeal. At length the dessert is brought in. The mammas, satisfied themselves, cleverly empty the plates into their reticules and pocket-handkerchiefs—probably for the children who are left at home—whilst the daughters read with great interest the devices upon the sugar work, which upon its summit contains unexampled stupidity, and exercise their wit in guessing charades.

The meal time, thank God, has an end like everything else. The money of the host changed into veal-cutlets, tarts, and wine, rests in our stomachs. With this burden we withdraw again into the saloon, stand there yet a while *pour l'honneur*, and talk of nothing; take leave at length, and wearied body and soul drive home, that we may lie down in bed at one or half-past, with overladen stomachs, with empty heads and hearts, which have preserved from the lately passed hours no other remembrances than such as have for their consequences on the following day, weariness and indisposition.

In the mean time the host and hostess of the supper go about amid extinguished lights, and congratulate one another that the history is come to an end, and comfort themselves for the expense of the supper by its having been splendid, and that people have had a deal of pleasure with them. Deceived, short-sighted mortals!—wait—soon will your grateful guests thank you with new suppers, and the bill for ennui, which you now owe them, will be perfectly balanced.

There hast thou, my Amalia, a sketch of a great city supper, and, with few exceptions, the suppers of the capital. They are a mass of sleepy sisters, whose mother, called Laziness, and whose foster-mother, Custom, continue to conduct them about with low curtseys from house to house. People have called them a thousand unbearable names, but people still delay to proscribe them, because Laziness and Custom are stiff ladies who have known how to gain respect, and against whom people cannot offend unpunished.

If people ridicule their hoop petticoats, they run the risk of being called foolish and self-willed.

If thou fancy that a touch of November spleen have thrown a dark shadow over this supper-description, I will not exactly say no to it ; but in the principal features it is true, and not caricatured.

It is incomprehensible to me how so many clever people can come together in order to fatigue themselves so.

If the genius of Pleasure were to publish a proclamation to its worshippers, with the invitation to enjoy themselves, I fancy to myself that its contents would probably be as follow :

“ Friends of pleasure, of cheerfulness and joy, old and young—ye who would enjoy life, its short hours of rest, its fleeting minutes—fly, fly suppers !

“ If ye would, during the long winter evenings, drive away the spirits of ennui, then listen to my recipe :

“ Assemble connexions, acquaintance, and friends, but not too many. The supper-sirocco arises from the crush and heat.

“ Be ye only a few ; be, however, cheerful ! Kindle the lights in your rooms, but still more the lights of understanding and of refined jest in your heads. Let the easy fire of joy be lighted for each other. Yet, once more, be cheerful, be kind, and, if you can, be witty ! Dance, play, sing—but do it all so that it may give you pleasure ! Let nothing begin heavily, nothing end heavily ! Entwine with light hands the garland of innocent joy ; and for that purpose extend to every one, unpretendingly, his little flower !

“ Is the pleasure of conversation dear to you, let the fire of ideas circulate among you ; throw one to another the sparks of jest, which shine, but do not burn. Let thought reply to thought, feeling to feeling, smile to smile, like melodious echoes, or rather like those gentle and charming tones which the lightest touch calls forth from the attuned harp.

“ The well-cared-for mind must not, however, forget the physical—the soul must not forget the body. Give to this a refreshment ; but let this also be light, be given without formality, be as it were a pleasure. If people sit down to table with serious, important faces, with knife and fork and napkin, to eat—then it is a labour.

“ ‘ People eat to live ; people do not live to eat,’ says a wise man. Would you give yourselves pleasure, then eat

and drink only to be able afterwards to laugh the more cordially."

When the all-wise Creator commanded that day and night should for twelve hours govern alternately our little globe, it certainly was by this his intention that man, his noble but weak child, should repose in the lap of the night, that he might be able to work and to enjoy himself amid the light of day. Therefore, let the end of the evening be the end of your day and your pleasures. Let midnight find you quiet, and taking your rest; and closing the day in peace at the right time, sing with the noble and amiable poet Franzén—

After an evening
By calm joy attended,
And cordially ended,
Sleep we so calmly, and waken well pleased.

Oh heaven! the clock strikes eight—the horrible supper-hour! The carriage is already drawn up, my husband stands ready, and I have not one single flower in my hair. Good night, happy Amalia, thou wilt soon go to bed, and I must yet arm myself for a campaign. To-morrow, if I am in a condition, I will sing—

After an evening
In eating expended,
Yawningly ended,
Sleep we so badly, and wake out of sorts.

THE H— FAMILY.

ARRIVAL.—TEA.—PORTRAITS.

TOWARDS the end of February, 1829, I found myself one evening at the custom-house, waiting for the compulsory visit of the officer, after which I could enter the capital of Sweden. It was during a terrible storm, and I was sitting in a small open sledge, frozen, weary, and sleepy, and consequently, as thy compassionate soul may think, my affectionate young reader, not exactly in an enviable condition.

My poor little horse, which had a cold, coughed and sneezed. The man who drove me, crossed his arms over his body to warm himself. The tempest howled, and the snow whirled around us. I closed my eyes and waited, as I have often done, and have always found to be best amid all snow-storms, as well within as out of the house, which one is not lucky enough to be able to escape. At length I heard slow steps advancing over the crackling snow. The inspector arrived with his lantern in his hand. He had a red nose, and looked unhappy. I held in my hand a bank-note, and wished to slip it into his, in order therewith to purchase for myself rest and an uninterrupted progress. He withdrew his hand. "It is not necessary," said he, drily, but courteously. "I shall not give you much trouble," continued he, as he began to lift out my travelling bags and to disarrange my bundles and bandboxes. I found myself, not without vexation, compelled to alight. Out of humour, and with a secret, mischievous pleasure, I dropped again my bank-note into my reticule, and thought, "Well, then, he shall not get anything for his trouble."

In the mean time my social driver began a conversation with him.

"It is dreadfully bad weather this evening, dear sir!"

"Yes."

"I think you would have found it a deal pleasanter to have been sitting in a warm room, and drinking a drop, instead of freezing your fingers with stopping us here, for which nobody thanks you."

No answer.

"I would give something now to be sitting with my old folks in the warm chimney corner, and eating my Sunday porridge, that would taste well, sir."

"Yes, yes!"

"Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Have you children?"

"Yes."

"And how many then?"

"Four." And a deep sigh followed this answer.

"Four? Nay, then, you have mouths enough to fill. Aha! Now you think you have found out something contraband. Cheese, dear sir; cheese, you see. Yes, your mouth may well water. I'd wager that you would rather bite into it than into the moon. Nay, do you not see that that is nothing but a butter tub? Must you of necessity dip your fingers into the brine?" etc., etc.

After the inspector had convinced himself that only a prodigious quantity of cheeses, loaves, and gingerbread, made up for the most part the lading of the sledge, he arranged all again in the most exact order, gave me his hand to assist me into the sledge, and carefully wrapped the furs around me. My displeasure had in the mean time altogether vanished. "It is," thought I, "the duty of poor inspectors to be the plague and torment of travellers, and this one has been mine in the politest way in the world." And whilst he continued to replace everything conscientiously and carefully, a variety of images arose in my soul which mollified me yet more. The red frosted nose, the dejected look, the stiff fingers, the four children, the snowy weather, the dark dismal evening; all these arose within me like shadows in a camera obscura, and softened my heart. I felt again after the bank-note; I thought about a loaf and a cheese as a supper for the poor children; but whilst I felt, whilst I thought, the inspector opened the bar, took off his hat politely, and I drove hastily through the barrier, wishing to call out "Halt!" but without

doing so. With a heavy heart, and with an uncomfortable feeling as if I had lost something valuable on the way, I drove through the city, and saw in the white whirling snow-flakes before me, as if in a transparency, the frosted red nose, and the dejected countenance, upon which I could so easily, at least for a moment, have called up a glad expression.

How many opportunities for doing good, in great or in small degree, are lost through indecision! Whilst we are asking ourselves, Shall I, or shall I not? the moment is passed, and the flower of joy which we might have given is withered, and often can no more be revived by tears of repentance.

Thus thought I sadly as my sledge slowly moved through the deep snow-slush of the streets, and often sank down into a kennel, out of which it was dragged with difficulty. The wind had blown out the lights in the lamps, and the streets were scarcely lighted at all, except by the shops. Here I saw a gentleman who had almost lost his cloak, and whilst he wrapped it tighter around him, the wind blew his hat off; there a lady, who, holding with one hand an umbrella, with the other her pelisse, went along blindly but courageously, and drove right upon a fruit-stall, whose sharp-nosed proprietor bid her with a shrill voice to look better about her.

Here howled a dog; there swore a fellow who had driven his cart against another; a little lad went whistling gaily amid the snow-storm and the hurly-burly, which did not trouble his calm, childish mind. Ever and anon a covered sledge with lighted lamps sped, comet-like, on its beaming path, driving aside both people and animals. This was all which I saw and heard of the great, magnificent capital this evening. In order to enliven myself, I began to think about the amiable family in whose bosom I should soon find myself, on the glad occasion which took me there, with other cheerful, light, and soul-warming things which I could bring together in my memory. At length my sledge stopped. My driver exclaimed, "Now we are there!" and I said to myself enraptured, "Now then I am here!" and I soon heard around me many voices, which, in various but joyful tones, exclaimed, "Good day!" "Good day!" "Good evening!" "Welcome! welcome!" I, my loaves, cheeses, gingerbread, all were heartily welcome, and installed in an excellent and warm room.

Half an hour later, I sate in the handsome and well-lighted drawing-room, where Colonel H—— and his family were assembled. It was tea-time; and from the boiling teakettle ascended a curling cloud of steam, which floated above the glittering teacups and the baskets up-heaped with cakes, rusks, and rye-loaves, which covered the ample tea-table. Telemachus, as he came out of Tartarus into the Elysian Fields, could not have felt a greater contentment than I, arrived from my snow-stormy journey, in the friendly haven of the tea-table. The gay, pleasant beings who moved around me; the excellent apartment; the lights, which in certain moments no little contribute to making the soul light; the enlivening, warming draught which I was enjoying; all was excellently animating, inspiriting, all was—— ah! wouldst thou believe it, my reader! that the frosted nose there at the barrier, in the midst of my pleasurable sensations set itself on the edge of my teacup, and embittered to me its nectar? Yes, yes, but it did; and I think that I should have been less shocked to have seen my own double! In order to regain my perfect peace, said I to myself, “To-morrow I will atone for my inattention; to-morrow!” and pacifying myself with my resolution for the morrow, I seated myself, according to my custom, silently in a corner of the room, knitting my stocking, sipping now and then from the teacup, which stood upon a little table beside me, and noticing unobservedly the family picture before me. Colonel H—— sate in a corner of the sofa, and laid Patience, the *blockade de Copenhagen*, I fancy. He was tall and strong-built, but thin, and had an invalid appearance. His features were noble, and from his deeply sunken eyes beamed forth a penetrating but quiet glance, for the most part full of an almost divine goodness, especially when it was riveted upon his children. He spoke seldom, never made speeches, but his words, uttered slowly and with a certain calm strength, had generally the effect of an oracle. Seriousness and mildness governed his whole being. He carried himself uncommonly upright; and I have always imagined that this was less the result of his military bearing than of his inflexible honesty, his firm integrity, which were the groundwork of his character, and were mirrored in his exterior.

He did not mingle in the conversation which, this evening, was carried on with much animation among his children; but

yet, now and then, let fall drily some witty observation, which, accompanied by an expression of countenance so archly comic, and yet at the same time so full of conciliating goodness towards those to whom it referred, that if such felt embarrassment they felt pleasure also.

His wife ("her Honour," as I from old custom mostly call her)—her Honour sate in the other corner of the sofa, and netted, but without particularly attending to her work. She seemed not to have been handsome even in her younger years, but had, especially when she spoke, something kind, lively, and interesting in her countenance, which it was a pleasure to see. There was something tender, something restless in her manner, and especially in her eyes. One read there that she incessantly bore upon her heart that long, unending promemoria of thoughts and cares which, for a wife, mother, and housekeeper, begin with husband and child, go through all the concerns, all the least branches of home and domestic management, and never once come to an end; like the atoms of dust, which may be blown away, but which always fall again.

Her Honour's tender and restless glances dwelt this evening most frequently upon Emilia, the eldest daughter, with an expression both of pleasure and pain. An affectionate smile floated upon her lips, and tears glittered on her eyelids; but both in the smiles and the tears beamed the warm and heartfelt love of the mother.

Emilia seemed not to observe her mother's glances, for she served tea quite calmly, with white and beautiful hands, whilst she endeavoured by a grave dignified mien to put an end to the tricks of her brother Carl, who introduced into the tea-service all that disorder which, as he asserted, existed in his sweet sister's own heart. She was of middle size, a compact and well-grown figure. Blond, fair, but without regular beauty of feature, her agreeable countenance was particularly attractive, from the expression of purity, kindness, and integrity which rested upon it. She seemed to have inherited her father's quiet character, united, at the same time, to greater gaiety, for she laughed frequently, spite of her assumed dignity, and that so heartily, that she induced all the rest to join her.

It is becoming to very few people to laugh; one sees too

many persons who during this expression of mirth place the handkerchief before the face, to conceal the disagreeableness which is occasioned by the puckered-up eyes, the movements of the stretched-out mouth, etc., etc. Emilia, had it been necessary for her to resort to this measure of prudence, would have scorned it—she was, even in the least thing, too simple and upright to practise a single coquettish manœuvre. She had not, however, in this case, any necessity, for her laugh was infinitely charming, as well because it was so naïve and so heartfelt, as that it displayed the loveliest white teeth that ever adorned a sweet and fresh mouth; yet of this she never thought.

If I had been a young man, I should have thought, the moment I saw Emilia, “Behold there my wife!” (N.B.—If she will.)

But yet Emilia was not in all respects as she seemed, or rather, she had a good deal of that inconsequence which may be interwoven and united even with the noblest human natures, even as there are knots in the finest and best-spun webs.

Besides all this, Emilia was no longer in her first youth; and thou, my young reader of sixteen, wilt perhaps consider her very, very old. “How old was she, then?” askest thou, perhaps. She had just passed her six-and-twentieth year. “Uh! that is horrible! she was indeed an old, old person!” Not so horrible—not so old, my rosebud. She was merely a rose in its full bloom, and so thought also Mr. —; but of this hereafter.

I pity the painter to whom the difficult task should be given of painting Julie’s portrait, for she is the *perpetuum mobile* in more than one sense. Now she plays tricks on her brother, who never leaves a debt of this kind unpaid; now employs herself in another way with her sisters. Sometimes she snuffs the candles, and snuffs them out, in order to have the pleasure of relighting them; she arranges or disarranges the ribbons of her mother’s negligée, and often stealing behind the Colonel, lays her arm around his neck, and kisses his forehead; his exclamation, “Let me alone, girl,” by no means preventing her soon coming again.

A charming little head, around which rich plaits of fair hair formed a crown, blue lively eyes, dark eyelashes and

eyebrows, a well-shaped nose with a little high-bred curve, a somewhat large but handsome mouth, a small delicate figure, small hands, small feet, more willing to dance than to walk—see there Julie, eighteen years of age.

Brother Carl—ah, I beg pardon—Cornet Carl, was three ells high, well grown, easy in his movements—thanks to nature, gymnastics, and Julie. He had many peculiar ideas, as steadfast as the hills, three of his favourite ideas being: Firstly, that the Swedish people are the first and most superior people in Europe. Against this, none of his family contend. Secondly, that he never shall fall in love, because he is twenty years of age without ever having felt his heart beat, whilst many of his more fortunate companions have gone crazy out of pure love. “It will come in time,” said the Colonel. Julie said he would presently be over head and ears in love. Emilia sighed, and prayed that God might defend him. Thirdly, the Cornet fancied that he was ugly enough even to frighten a horse. Julie said that this peculiarity was very fortunate for him in case of an attack of the enemy’s cavalry; but she, as well as her sisters and many others, regarded the open, honest, manly expression of her brother’s countenance as a full compensation for any lack of beauty in feature. She often repeated to him with a secret little joy how horribly ugly and unbearable she considered Mr. P., with the handsome Apollo-head without expression and life. Cornet Carl loved his sisters tenderly, and rendered them all the service which lay in his power, more especially that of trying their patience.

Near to her father sate the youngest of the daughters, Helena, now seventeen. At the first glance one cast upon her, one was ready to pity her; at the next, to wish her happiness. She was plain and humpbacked, but intellect and cheerfulness beamed from her uncommonly bright eyes. She seemed to possess that steadfastness and repose of character, that clearness of mind, that stability and cheerfulness, which give a more sure guarantee for the repose and happiness of life than all those showy outward attractions which are worshipped and loved by the world. She was working zealously at a dress of white silk, and now looked up from her work to nod kindly and significantly at Emilia, or to raise to her father a glance of reverential, almost adoring tenderness.

One might almost fancy that the Colonel, of all his children, loved most this one whom nature seemed so hardly to have used, for often when Helena would lay her head upon her father's shoulder, and raise to him her affectionate glance, he would bend down to her, and kiss her forehead with an expression of tenderness which cannot be described. On the other side of the Colonel sate a young lady, the daughter of a relative. She might have been taken for an antique statue; so beautiful, so marble-white, so immovable was she. More beautiful dark eyes than hers were never seen; but ah! she certainly was to be pitied. Those beautiful eyes never more could behold the light of day. She had been blind from cataract for four years. That which ruled in her soul, whether storm or shine, it was difficult to see; its mirror was darkened, and something proud, cold, and almost half-dead, lay in her exterior, and repelled all questioning glances. It seemed to me as if in the hour when fate announced to her "Thou shalt no more see light," she had said with a feeling of proud despair, with a solemn oath, "No one shall see my suffering!"

Still one other little group must come forth in my picture; namely, that which in the background of the room consisted of Magister* Nup, distinguished for his good-nature, learning, silence, shortsightedness, his turned-up nose, and his absence of mind; together with his pupils, the little Axel and the little Claes, the youngest sons of the Colonel, remarkable for their especial good condition and plumpness, for which reason they had in the family the surname of "the Dumplings."

The Magister, spite of his wig having taken fire three times, hung now with his nose over his book in the nearest possible proximity to the light. The Dumplings ate rusks and played at the famished fox, and waited for the fourth illumination of the Magister's head, the approach of which they announced to each other every now and then by friendly elbow jogs, and "See now! Wait now! Now it comes!"

Now, I should like inexpressibly to know whether any of my amiable young readers, either out of a great politeness or a little curiosity, would wish to have any nearer descrip-

* Master of Arts.

tion of the person who sits in a corner of the room, stock still, knitting her stocking, sipping now and then from her cup of tea, and making her remarks on the company.

In order that I may not leave any wish of my readers unfulfilled, I will also give a sketch of her. She belongs to that class of persons of whose existence a simple member of the sisterhood has thus expressed herself: "Sometimes it is as if one were everywhere, sometimes again it is as if one were nowhere." This strange existence belongs in general to persons who, without belonging to families, are received into them for sociality, for help, for counsel and action, in pleasure and in need. I will, in a few words, give a description of such a person in general; and in order that she may not remain insignificant in our titled social circle, I will bestow on her the title of "House Counsellor." Her sphere of action is extensive, and is of the following nature. She may have her thoughts, her hand, her nose, in everything, and foremost in everything—but it must not be observed. Is the gentleman of the house in a bad humour? Then is she pushed forward either in the capacity of a lightning-conductor or else a pair of bellows, whose property it is to blow away the tempest. Has the lady the vapours? Then her presence is as necessary as the bottle of eau-de-Cologne. Have the daughters vexation? Then she is there to share it. Have they little wishes, plans, projects? Then she is the speaking-trumpet through which they speak to deaf ears. If the children cry, then they send for her to pacify them. Will they not sleep? She must tell them stories. Is anybody ill? She watches. She executes commissions for the whole family, and good counsel must she have on all occasions, ready for everybody. Does grand company come? Is the house put in gala-array? Then—she vanishes; people know not where she is, no more than they know where the smoke which ascended up the chimney is gone; but the works of her invisible presence cease not to betray her. One sees not upon the festal board the pan in which the cream was boiled; this must stand quietly upon the kitchen hearth; and in like manner is it the lot of the House Counsellor to prepare the useful and the agreeable, but to renounce the honour. If she can do this with stoical patience and resignation, then her existence is often as inte-

resting for herself as it is important in the family circle. It is true that she must be humble and quiet, go softly through doors, must move with less noise than a fly, and above all things, she must not, like the fly, settle upon people's noses; and she must yawn as seldom as her human nature will allow. But, on the contrary, she may use eyes and ears in freedom, although with prudence, and she has excellent opportunities to derive benefit therefrom. Contrary to what is required in the physical world, there is in the moral world no place so useful for an observatory as the lowly one unobserved by all eyes; and consequently, the House Counsellor possesses the most advantageous position for directing around the family hemisphere her searching telescope. Every movement, every spot upon the heart's planet, becomes visible by degrees to her; she follows the smallest wandering comet upon its path; she sees the eclipses come and go; and whilst she observes the phenomena, the growing feelings and thoughts in the human soul, more countless than the stars of heaven, she learns day after day to comprehend and interpret one point after another of the Creator's great and admirable hieroglyphics. It is evident, therefore, that she by degrees must acquire a good deal of that precious, ever-applicable gold, which is called knowledge of mankind; and the hope smiles upon her, that she shall in the future, when spectacles adorn her nose and silver hair her aged brow, as an oracle speak to listening youth of that which she *knows*, and which they now do not *anticipate*.

So much for the personality of the House Counsellor in general. A few words now on that one who, in the family of Colonel H——, must fill this character to a certain extent. To a certain extent I say, because, thank God, she is regarded there more as a friend, and therefore does hold merely not the post of the prompter, nor yet merely stand behind the scenes; but steps often forth upon the stage, and says her word just as freely and unreservedly as any of the other actors.

The first word which her childish lips stammered forth after her twelvemonth's sojourn upon this lower earth, was "Moon." Eight years after this, she wrote her verses "To the Moon;" and the morning of a life which since then developed itself so drily and prosaically was a lovely poetical

moonlight dream. Many a sonnet, many an ode, was consecrated by her pen to all the most attractive objects of nature, whilst the rich youthful days in which the heart beat so high, in which the feelings swelled like a spring flood, and in which the abundant well of tears flowed from so sweet a pain—but in all which she sung, wrote, or dreamed, there was always something of moonshine.

The parents shook their wise heads. "Girl, if thou writest verses, thou wilt never learn to make soup; thou wilt let the sauce burn. Thou must think betimes that thou must learn to maintain thyself; must be able to spin thy thread and bake thy bread. One cannot satisfy oneself with moonshine." But the girl wrote her verses, and boiled the soup, and did not burn the sauce; turned round her spinning-wheel, baked her bread; but forgot not her childhood's friend, the gentle moon. Afterwards, when its friendly light shone upon the grave of her parents, she wrote no verses in their honour, but looked up with a beseeching glance to the mild heavenly countenance, as to a comforter, whose light should enliven and guide the fatherless and motherless upon her solitary way. But ah! the fatherless and the motherless might have nearly famished in the beloved moonlight, had not another light, and other beams, brought to her salvation. This came from the hearth of a count's kitchen. She succeeded in the preparation of a wine-jelly, and this made her fortune.

People had discovered in her the talent of making excellent wine-jelly; people became by degrees aware that she also possessed some other similar invaluable gifts. One young lady with chapped lips found herself greatly benefited by her lip-salve; one old gentleman found in her, to his great comfort, a never-weary listener to the histories of his forty-nine ailments. The tender mother of four little wonderfully gifted children heard with deep emotion from their rosy lips of her uncommon ability in rhyming together father and rather, pleasure and treasure, little and brittle, birthday and mirth-day, etc., etc. A sleepy honourable lady was all at once wide awake when this same gifted person prophesied by the cards that she would very soon receive a present; nine persons celebrated within a short time her excellent advice for toothache, pain in the chest, and for colds in

the head; and at a bridal and a funeral, people discovered in her a wonderful faculty for arranging all, from “her grace’s” head-dress down to the dish of confectionery; from the myrtle wreath in the locks of the bride down to the bread and butter; and at the solemn festival, the decking of the last resting-place of the dead bride, as well as the entertainment of those who, even on mournful occasions, never forget that people must eat to live.

By the industrious use of these talents, and by the bringing forth of others of a similar kind, she rose by degrees, step by step, to the rank of a House Counsellor. The writing of verses she had almost entirely forgotten, excepting that now and then some meagre lines were forced out from duty.

Upon the moon she looks but seldom, unless to observe when the moon is new or in the wane; and yet its beams are perhaps the only friends which will visit her lonely grave. But here is not now the question about writing elegies. Will anybody now know anything more about the prosaic friend of the moon? Her age? That is somewhere between twenty and forty years. Her appearance? As most people’s is; although, perhaps, most people might be quite offended if they were thought to have any resemblance to her. Her name? Ah! your most obedient servant,

CHRISTINA BEATA HVAR DAGSLAG.

JULIE’S LETTER.—HELENA.—THE BLIND.—EMILIA—THE BRIDEGROOMS.

I HAVE already said that it was a happy occasion which was the cause of my journey to the capital; and I should therefore give the best account of it if I laid before the eyes of my young readers the letter which I a short time before received, in my solitude in the country, from Julie H——.

MY DEAR BEATA,

Lay aside thy eternal knitting when thou seest these lines; snuff thy long-wicked candle. (It is, is it not, in the evening that the post comes to R——?) Bolt thy door, so that, without any fear of being disturbed, thou canst sit in peace and comfort on thy sofa, and with the befitting atten-

tion read the great, remarkable news I have to announce to thee. I can see at this distance how horribly curious thou art—how thy eyes open—and now I will tell thee—a tale!

There was once upon a time a man—who was neither king nor prince, but who yet deserved to be both. He had a daughter; and although fate had not permitted her to be born a princess, yet there assembled themselves half a score of gracious fairies around the little one's cradle, merely out of pure esteem and kindness to her father. They gave to her beauty, understanding, grace, talents, a noble heart, good temper, patience, in one word, all which can be given to make a woman charming; and in order to complete the measure of good gifts, the fairy Prudence stepped forth, last of all, speaking thus, in carefully selected words: "For the sake of her temporal and eternal welfare, she shall be in the highest degree prudent and circumspect, nay, even difficult, in the choice of a husband!" "Well said; wisely said!" exclaimed all the lady-fairies, amid deep sighs.

The richly-gifted one grew up, was as amiable as any one might reasonably expect, and lovers soon knocked early and late, with sighs and prayers, upon the door of her heart. But ah! for the most of them it remained immovably bolted; and if it were, only for a moment, opened a very little to any one, it was closed again in the next minute, and fastened with double bolts. Fortunately, the time of the Princess Turandot was long passed; and in Sweden, where the lovely Elimia dwelt, the air must have been of a much cooler kind than that of the land where Prince Calaf sighed—for one never heard of the rejected lovers putting an end to their lives; one saw them scarcely lose their appetite; yes, one even hears of some who (would any one believe it?) choose a beloved with as much indifference as one chooses a stocking.

The first who announced himself as aspirant to the heart of the beautiful Elimia was found by her to be too sentimental, because he was horrified at the crime of killing a gnat, and sighed over the innocent chickens which figured as roast upon the dinner-table, and which, besides, were the favourite dish of his beloved. United to him, she feared the danger of being starved to death on pure blanc-mange and vegetables. The second did not avoid treading upon emmets, loved fishing and hunting, and looked as if he were cruel and

hard-hearted ; rather, much rather, would she marry a hare than a hunter ! A hare came, shy in look, trembling in his knees, stammering forth his sighs, his wishes, and his doubts. "Poor little thing," was the answer, "go and hide thyself, thou wilt otherwise be the prey of the first wild beast which meets thee in his path !" The hare hopped away. The lion-man stepped forth with proud lover-words. Now the beauty was in great fear of being eaten up, and she hid herself till the mighty one was gone past. This was the fourth. The fifth, merry and gay, was considered to be trifling ; the sixth was believed to have an inclination for gambling ; the seventh, in consequence of two or three pimples on his nose, to be inclined to strong liquors ; the eighth looked as if he could be ill-tempered ; the ninth seemed to be an egotist ; the tenth said in every sentence, "The devil fetch me !"—it would not be well to venture forth into life with him. The eleventh looked too much upon his hands and feet, and was, therefore, a fool. The twelfth came. He was good, noble, manly, handsome ; he seemed to love honestly ; he talked well ; people were in great perplexity what faults they should find in him. He seemed to love truly, but perhaps only seemed ; or if he loved, perhaps it was rather the attractive, perishable body than the immortal soul.—God help us, what heavy sin ! If it continued thus then—— but the lover swore that it was the soul, precisely the soul itself which he adored, and in that fortunate moment he so powerfully assailed the already yielding heart, that in the end her trembling lips moved themselves in such a way that he saw they must open the door through which the capitulating YES must proceed. He took this all for settled, regarded the word as said, fell upon his knees, kissed her hand and mouth, and lovely Elimia, ready to fall down with astonishment and confusion, found herself, she did not know how, betrothed.

The marriage was fixed by her father and her bridegroom for a short time afterwards. Elimia did not say yes to that, but neither did she say no ; and her bridegroom thought "silence gives consent." As the time went on, the lovely Elimia counted. "Now there are only fourteen, now only twelve ; Gracious Heaven ! now only ten ; and Lord have mercy ! now only eight days remaining !" A great anguish and horror overcame her soul. Spectral and ghostly shapes,

numerous as the locusts which overwhelmed Egypt, took possession of her hitherto so bright and calm spirit, and called forth there uneasiness and darkness. Now she wished to delay, not to say break off, her engagement with the noble Almanzor; who certainly, said she, had many more faults than people believed; and one uncommonly great one, that of being so well able to hide them. Perfection is not the lot of human nature; and they who seem to be most free from faults, are perhaps, in fact, the least so. Besides which, she fancied that their characters did not at all harmonise; further, he was too young, she too old; and so on; and the sum and end of all was, that she should be unhappy for the whole of her life.

A very good friend of Elimia had the greatest desire in the world to break the neck of the fairy Prudentia, whose unlucky gifts caused Elimia to thrust from her the happiness which awaited her in her union with a husband who seemed altogether made for her, and devoted to her in the tenderest manner.

Now I see how impatient thou art, Beata, and askest what is the sum and substance of all this, and what purpose it serves? All this, my good friend, will serve, first and foremost, as a little whet to the appetite before dinner, because I have to show thee what wonderful magic power is suddenly bestowed upon the little Julie; for with a few strokes of my pen I change all my above-mentioned personages; make *once* into *now*, and the tale into truth.

Almanzor then becomes the young, amiable Algernon S——; and his bride, lovely Elimia, my sister Emilia H——, who so bitterly repents of the “yes” which she has given. The fairy Prudentia again must undergo a great change; and is nothing else but the fickleness and irresolution which have so strong a power over Emilia’s heart that she now questions whether she is determined to enter the holy condition of matrimony. If one do not now from all sides push her onward, she will go, like the crabs, backwards. Now this Emilia, whom I so inwardly love, and who often makes me so impatient, sits in the corner of the sofa opposite to me pale and restless, thinking upon her wedding-day—and having the vapours! Must one laugh about it or cry? I do both, and make Emilia do the same.

The only thing one can now do, to prevent poor Emilia from pondering and beating her brains, troubling and distressing herself for nothing, is to allow everything to go topsyturvy, with bustle and stir around her, till her wedding-day—and so turn her head, if possible. I know that papa would never allow any of us to break a given promise. Emilia knows this to; and I fancy that it is precisely this which makes her so dejected. And yet she loves Algernon; yes, adores him at times; but she would, for all that, if she dared, give him now a refusal. Tell me how can one explain this—how does it hang together? Still, however, when her fate is once inevitably determined, I know that all will be well; and the drollery of the affair is, that Emilia thinks so too. In the mean time, everything must be prepared this next week. On Sunday, that is to-morrow week, is the horrible wedding-day. Emilia will be married at home, and only a few acquaintance will be invited. Emilia wishes it to be so, and people gratify her now in everything which she desires, if it be only reasonable. She says people do so with all poor victims. Comical idea! Thou seest, dear Beata, how necessary thy presence here is for us all. In truth, we need in every respect thy counsel and thy aid. Pack up, therefore, thy things immediately, and journey here as quickly as thou canst.

On Monday Algernon comes to Stockholm, and with him my bridegroom also. I have not been so hard to please, so anxious as Emilia, and yet have not chosen badly. My Arvid is an Adonis, and has a heart which is worth gold. Papa thinks much of him, and that is the most important thing. My good, my revered, my beloved papa! I had so firmly resolved never to leave him and mamma—I cannot imagine how I ever determined to be a bride; but my Arvid was irresistible. Papa, however, has Helena, who never will marry, and Helena is worth three such Julies as I am. Papa was at first much against my marriage, and had so many objections that it was nearly given up altogether; but I threw myself upon my knees and wept, and Arvid's father (the friend of papa's youth) made such beautiful speeches, and Arvid himself looked so cast down, that papa in the end was softened, and said, "Nay, they may then have one another!" And Arvid and I exulted like two larks. Thou wilt see him; he has a dark moustache and imperial, large blue eyes, the

loveliest—but thou wilt see—thou wilt see! He has the most beautiful *son de voix* in the world, and Emilia may say what she will, but it is actually charming when he says, “The thousand fetch me!”

It sounds strange, perhaps, thou thinkest—but thou shalt see, thou shalt hear! Come, come, and embrace, at the latest on the evening after to-morrow,

Thy friend,

JULIE H.

P.S.—Bring with thee, I pray, some of the beautiful loaves which thou knowest that papa and mamma think so much of; some cheese for Carl and Helena, and a little gingerbread for me. Thou hast always a store of such. Emilia, poor Emilia, poor Emilia! methinks, will have quite enough to swallow down her vapours. Thou canst not conceive how afraid I am that she may, out of pure anxiety and grief, be quite yellow or ugly when Algernon comes. Emilia, I fancy, almost wishes it in order to put his love to her immortal soul to the test. I fancy, actually, that she would require him to love her just the same if she were changed into a mole! I am really troubled. Emilia is so changeable in her appearance, and is quite another person when she is anxious and uneasy than when she is calm and cheerful.

Once more farewell.

P.S.—Dost thou know who is to marry Emilia?—Professor L., who looks so horribly grave, has a twisted foot, a red eye, and two warts upon his nose! He has lately received a living. Papa has great esteem and friendship for him. As far as I am concerned, I should have no great pleasure in being married by a weak-eyed priest. But I am not to be married for a couple of years, or, perhaps, in the autumn, therefore it is not worth while thinking about it now.

I had nearly forgotten the innumerable greetings of the whole family to thee.

I immediately accepted Julie's invitation, and arrived, as has already been seen, one evening at the end of February, at Colonel H.'s.

There remain yet a few words to be said on the occurrences of this evening, and I knit again to these the thread of my narrative. The blind girl, who had sate for a time silent and still, said at length with a kind of vehemence:

“I would sing.” Helena rose up quickly, led her to the piano, and sate down to accompany her. Helena inquired what she would sing. “*Ariadne à Naxos*,” was the short determined answer. They began. In the beginning the voice of the singer was not pleasant to me; it was strong, deep, almost dejected; but the more attentively one listened the more one paid regard to the feeling which spoke through it, and which it revealed with magical truth, the more one was enchanted; one shuddered involuntarily; one felt one’s heart beat in sympathy with Ariadne when she, penetrated by an increasing anguish, seeks for her beloved, and takes the resolution to climb the rock in order that there she may the more easily be able to discover him. The accompaniment here expressing in a masterly manner her climbing, one seems to see how she hastened breathless and full of foreboding. At length she has neared the top, her eye is cast over the sea, and perceives the white, ever receding sail. The blind girl followed Ariadne with her whole soul, and one might have believed, by the expansion of her eyes, that she saw something more than—mere darkness. Tears involuntarily filled all eyes as she, with a heartrending expression of love and pain in voice and countenance, exclaimed with Ariadne, “*Theseus! Theseus!*” When her inspiration and our delight had reached the highest point, the Colonel suddenly rose up, went to the piano, took the singer by the hand, led her away without saying a single word, and placed her again upon the sofa, seating himself beside her. I remarked that she hastily withdrew her hand from his. She was deathly pale, and much excited. No one except myself appeared to be astonished at this scene. They began an indifferent conversation, in which every one, excepting the blind girl, took part. In about an hour the Colonel said to her, “You need rest;” and with that arose and conducted her from the room, after she silently, but with a kind of solemnity, bowed her head in salutation of the remaining company. Just as he was about to leave the room, the Colonel called “*Helena*,” and Helena followed them.

Soon after this I went up into my room to enjoy repose ; but the image of the blind girl, which incessantly floated before me, prevented me long from doing so. I heard her penetrating voice, saw her expressive countenance, and could not help endeavouring to guess the nature of the feelings which shook her soul.

I was not yet asleep as Emilia and Julie softly stole into their room, which was next to mine. The door stood open, and I heard the half-aloud conversation of the two sisters. Julie said with some vexation, "You yawn, you sigh, and yet Algernon is coming in the morning ! Emilia, you have no more feeling than a paper-box."

EMILIA. How do you know but that this is out of sympathy with Algernon, who perhaps just now does the same ?

JULIE. That he does not : that I am sure of. I should much sooner believe that he hardly knows on which foot he stands, out of impatient joy of soon seeing you.

EMILIA. Do you judge this from his last letter ?

JULIE. That, indeed, was written in such haste. One is not always alike inclined for writing ; perhaps he had a severe headache, or a bad cold in the head, or he had taken cold.

EMILIA. Whatever you will ; but nothing can excuse the cold, unmeaning end of the letter.

JULIE. I assure you, Emilia, it stands there "with the tenderest devotion."

EMILIA. And I am certain that it stands there quite dry and cold, "with esteem and devotion remain," and so on ; just as people write to an indifferent person, "subscribed with esteem," and so on ; for the meagre esteem must always remain when the warmer feelings are gone. Where is my nightcap ? Ah, see there ! Ho ! ho ! ho ! ho ! You, Julie, see everything rose-coloured.

JULIE. I see that a lover must take care never to speak of esteem. But I am sure that Algernon never wrote that horrible word ; he used one much warmer and more heartfelt. Sweet Emilia, fetch his letter. You will there see that you have done him injustice.

EMILIA. On purpose to please you, I will fetch his letter. We shall then see that I am right.

JULIE. And we shall see that I am right.

Emilia fetched the letter. Both sisters approached the light. Julie would snuff the candle; and either by accident or intention, snuffed it out. For a moment all was as silent as it was dark, and then Emilia's hearty laughter was heard. Julie joined in, and I could not avoid making a trio with them. Tumbling over, and running against chairs and tables, the sisters at length found their beds, and cried, laughing to me, "Good night, good night!"

The day after my arrival was the so-called "cleaning-day," a day which now and then occurs in all well-ordered houses, and which may be likened to a tempestuous day in nature, after whose storms and rain-gushes all comes forth in renewed brightness, order, and freshness.

They scoured, aired, dusted, and swept in all corners. Her Honour, who would herself oversee everything, went incessantly in and out through all the doors, and mostly left them all open, which occasioned a horrible draught. In order to preserve myself from earache and toothache, I fled from one room to another, and found at length in Helena's, up another flight of stairs, a haven free from storm. This little apartment seemed to me the most comfortable and most cheerful in the whole house. It had windows towards the sunny side; the walls were ornamented with pictures, which for the most part represented charming landscapes. Among these were distinguished two from Fahlcrantz, in which the pencil of this great artist had conjured up the enchanting repose which a beautiful summer evening diffuses over nature, and which communicates itself so powerfully to the human heart. The eye which fixed itself attentively upon these pictures, soon expressed something loving, pensive, and dreamy; this was the surest guarantee for their truthful beauty.

The furniture of the room was handsome and convenient. A piano, a well-filled bookcase, and easel for painting, showed that in this little circumscribed world there failed nothing of all that which can make the pleasures of the outer world dispensable, and which can occupy the passing hours of the day in the most agreeable manner.

Large, splendid geraniums stood in the windows, and awoke, by their fresh verdure, pleasant thoughts of spring, whilst they softened and broke up the beams of the sun,

which on this day shone in all the brilliancy which they commonly possess in the keen winter frost. A beautiful carpet covered the floor, which seemed to be scattered over with flowers.

Helena was seated on the sofa, at her sewing. The New Testament lay before her on her work-table.

She received me with a smile expressive of the heart's peace and satisfaction. I placed myself near her at my work, and felt myself particularly cheerful and happy of mood. We worked at Emilia's bridal-dress.

"You observe my room," said Helena, smiling, whilst her eyes took the direction of mine.

"Yes," replied I; "your sisters' rooms are handsome and excellent, but one must confess that they are not to be compared with this."

"It has been my father's will," said she, "that Helena should be the only spoiled child in the house." She continued, with tears in her eyes, "My good papa has wished that I should never miss the joys and pleasures which are the lot of my handsome, healthy sisters, and from which I am excluded by my suffering and my infirmity. Therefore he has taught me to enjoy that which is far richer, that which a knowledge and practice of the fine arts offer to those who embrace them with a warm and open mind. He formed and strengthened my understanding, by regular and earnest studies, which he himself directed, and he has collected in this little corner, where I pass the greater part of my life, much that is charming and beautiful for the eye, for the feelings, and the thoughts. Yet, that which is more than all this, is the heartfelt fatherly love with which he embraces and surrounds me, and which secures me from bitterly feeling the want of love, the enjoyment of which nature has denied me. He has perfectly succeeded; and I have no other wish than that of living for him, for my mother, my family, and—my God."

We were silent for a moment, and I worshipped in my heart the father who so well understood how to care for the happiness of her to whom he had given life. Helena continued. "When mamma is gone with my sisters to balls or into company, he passes his time for the most part with me. I read to him, play to him; and he permits me, out of inde-

scribable goodness, to believe that I contribute essentially to the happiness of his life. That thought makes me happy. It is a beautiful, an enviable lot, to know that one is *something* to *him* who is a blessing to all who surround him."

"Oh!" thought I, and addressed in thought the fathers of families on the earth, "why are so few like this father? Kings of home, how much happiness could you not diffuse around you, how worshipped might you not be!"

We talked afterwards of Emilia.

"It is strange," said Helena, "that a person who generally is so calm, so clear in her judgments, so decided, so reasonable in one word, should in this one point be so unlike herself. Determined to marry, because she regards a happy marriage as the most blessed condition on earth, Emilia has had the greatest possible difficulty to resolve upon it. Two of her young friends—the unhappy marriages of two—has infused into her a sort of panic dread; and she fears so much being unhappy in her marriage, that she never would have the courage to be happy, if others did not act for her. She is now nearly half ill with anxiety, that her union is so near at hand with Algernon, for whom she seems to have an actual devotion, and with whom we are all convinced that she will be perfectly happy. She has intervals of calm, and in such a one you saw her last evening. I fear that it will soon be over, and expect that with it we shall see her disquiet and irresolution increase in proportion as the deciding hour approaches, which, as I am persuaded, will perfectly put an end to it; for when once anything irrevocable is determined, Emilia submits herself, and seeks the best in everything. It will be necessary that till the wedding-day we endeavour in every possible way to divert her, and prevent her from occupying herself with useless fancies. We have each one of us our particular part in the little comedy which we must act before and with our good sister. Papa means to make her walk industriously; mamma consults with her about everything which now must be arranged before the wedding. Julie intends, in one way or another, never to leave her quiet. Brother Carl will often draw her into dispute about Napoleon, whom he places below Charles the Twelfth, which she cannot bear; and this is the only subject on which I have heard my quiet, good sister dispute with warmth. I, on the contrary, shall occupy her much about her toilet. My

little brothers, taught by nature, have known their parts for a long time by heart, which consist in clamouring incessantly, now for this, now for that. Hitherto we have all of us divided the care of satisfying them, now it must all rest upon her alone. You, good Beata, will be delegated, upon every fitting occasion, and in a skilful manner, to introduce commendations of Algernon, which you will not find difficult to award him. Emilia looks upon us all as a party for him; you cannot be suspected of it, and your praise will therefore operate all the better."

I was quite pleased with my commission. It is always agreeable to praise people when one can do it with a good conscience.

After we had spoken for a long time of Emilia and her beloved, of her establishment, and so on, I turned the conversation upon the blind girl, and endeavoured to obtain more knowledge of her.

Helena avoided the subject, and merely said, "Elisabeth has been a year with us. We like her, and hope in time to win her confidence, and thereby be able to make her happier."

After this, Helena proposed to me to visit her. "I go generally," said she, "every forenoon to her, and have not been there to-day. I would willingly give her much of my time, if she would not rather be alone."

We went together to the blind girl's room.

She sat dressed upon her bed, and sang softly to herself.

"Oh, how much has she suffered! she is a living image of pain!" thought I, as I now approached her, and in the daylight contemplated that pale, lovely countenance, in which were intelligible traces of a severe and not yet ended struggle, and of a pain too deep, too bitter, to be expressed by tears.

A young girl, whose rosy cheeks and gay exterior formed a strong contrast with the poor sufferer, sat in a corner of the room and sewed. She was there to wait upon the blind girl. With a touching cordiality in word and voice, Helena spoke to Elisabeth; she replied coldly and in monosyllables! It seemed to me as if she endeavoured, after we entered, to assume by degrees that cold and inanimate expression which I remarked in her on the foregoing evening. The conversation was continued only between Helena and me, whilst the blind girl silently occupied herself with winding and unwind-

ing a black silk cord around her remarkably beautiful hands. All at once she said, "St! st!" and a faint crimson flushed her cheeks, and her bosom heaved higher. We were silent and listened; after a few seconds we heard the dull sound of footsteps, which slowly approached. "It is he!" said she, as if to herself. I looked inquiringly upon Helena. Helena looked upon the ground. The Colonel entered. The blind girl rose up, and remained standing still as a statue; yet I thought that I remarked in her a light tremor. The Colonel talked to her with his customary calmness, although, as I thought, not with his customary kindness; and said that he was come to fetch her, because he would drive out her and Emilia. "The air," added he, "is fresh and clear; it will do you good."

"Me good?" said she, with a bitter smile; but without heeding it the Colonel desired Helena to assist her in dressing. The blind girl said nothing, allowed herself to be silently dressed, thanked nobody, and went out conducted by the Colonel.

"Poor Elisabeth!" said Helena, with a compassionate sigh, when she was gone. I had not indeed the key to this enigmatical being, but had seen enough to make me sigh also heartily, "Poor Elisabeth!"

We returned to our work, which was continued, amid pleasant conversation, till noon.

I went then to Emilia, who was returned from her drive, and found her contending with Julie, who endeavoured with real anxiety to take from her a dress which Emilia seemed to wish to put on. Emilia laughed heartily; Julie, on the contrary, looked as if she would cry.

"Help, Beata, help!" exclaimed she; "did any one ever hear or see such a thing? Listen, Beata! Precisely because Emilia expects Algernon to-day will she put on her ugliest dress—yes, a dress which is so unbecoming that she does not look like herself in it! And not satisfied with that, she will put on an apron as thick as a swaddling-band, and she will put a comb in her hair which Medusa must certainly have left among her effects, it is so horrible! Now I have contended and laboured for a quarter of an hour against this unlucky toilet, but in vain!"

"If in Algernon's eyes," said Emilia, with a dignified air

and countenance, "merely a dress or a comb can contribute to make one agreeable or disagreeable, then——"

"See, there we have it!" exclaimed Julie, disconcerted; "now we are come to the proofs, and I know not how ugly and horrible she may make herself, in order to prove whether Algernon will not exceed in fidelity all the most renowned heroes of romance. I pray you, for God's sake, do not cut off either your ears or your nose!" Emilia laughed. "And you could so easily be handsome and amiable," continued Julie, beseeching earnestly, whilst she endeavoured to get possession of the unfortunate dress and comb. "I have determined to be thus dressed to-day," answered Emilia, solemnly; "I have my reasons for it, and if I awaken your and Algernon's abhorrence—then I must submit to my fate."

"Emilia will nevertheless be handsome," said I to Julie, with an attempt to console her; "go now and dress yourself for dinner. Think that you also have a bridegroom to please."

"Ah," said Julie, "with him this is not difficult; if I were to dress myself in a bag and put a jug on my head, he would find that it became me excellently."

"Then you believe," returned Emilia, "that Algernon has not the same eyes for me as Arvid for you?"

Julie looked somewhat confused.

"Go now, go," I interrupted; "we shall never be ready. Go, Julie; I shall help Emilia, and I dare wager anything that she will be handsome against her will."

Julie went at length to Helena, who every day combed and plaited her remarkably lovely hair.

Alone with Emilia, and whilst I assisted her with the grey-brown dress, which in truth was unbecoming, I said to her a few, according to my opinion, sensible words on her state of mind and conduct. She replied to me: "I confess that I am not as I ought to be: I wish I could be otherwise; but I feel so restless, so unhappy, that at times I cannot govern myself. I am now about to form a connexion which it perhaps would have been better never to have agreed to, and if, during the time which yet remains to me, I should be convinced that my fears are well founded, nothing in the world shall prevent me making an end of this

connexion, and thereby preventing my being unhappy for my whole life. For if it be true that one finds a heaven in a happy marriage, it is just as true that an unhappy one is a hell."

"If you do not love Mr. S——," said I, "I really wonder that you have allowed the affair to go so far."

"Not love him?" repeated Emilia, with great astonishment; "certainly I love him, and therein exactly lies my misfortune: my love blinds me to the perception of his faults."

"Nobody would have imagined that, after what you have just said," replied I, smiling.

"Ah, yes! ah, yes!" said Emilia; "it is so, nevertheless; some are so palpable that one cannot be blind to them; for example, he is too young."

"How unworthy," said I, laughing; "that is actually mean of him!"

"Yes, you may laugh. For me, it is really not laughable. I will not say precisely that it is his fault; but it is all the same as a fault in him in regard to me. I am twenty-six years old, and thus am nearly past the boundary of my youth; he is merely two years older, and consequently as a man yet quite young. I shall be a venerable matron when he is yet a young man. Probably he may be inclined to frivolity, and gladly leave his old tiresome wife for——"

"Oho! oho!" interrupted I; "that is almost too long a perspective. Have you reason to suspect that he is a frivolous character?"

"Not exactly positive; but in this frivolous age, truth and constancy are such rare virtues. I know that I am not Algernon's first love—who will assure me that I shall be his last? I should be able to bear everything excepting the infidelity of my husband—that I think I could not survive. I have said that to Algernon—he has assured me—but what will not a lover assure one of? Besides, how can I know whether he loves me with the pure, true love, which alone is strong and enduring? He may have for me only a fancy; and this is a weak, easily severed thread. I have often thought (and it has often inwardly grieved me) that perhaps my property, or that which I may one day have, has influenced——"

"No—now you go too far," said I; "you see ghosts in daylight. How can you only seize upon suspicions? You have known him——"

"Only for two years," interrupted Emilia; "and nearly from the first moment of our acquaintance he paid court to me, and has naturally shown to me only his amiable side. And who, indeed, can see into the heart of man? See, Beata, I cannot say that I know the man with whom I would unite my fate. And how could I become acquainted with him? When people only see one another in regular precise social life, in which scarcely any character has the opportunity of developing itself, one becomes acquainted only with the external and the superficial. A person may be passionate, avaricious, inclined to bad and peevish tempers; and what is worse than all this, may be without religion; and yet one might see him for whole years in the social circle without suspecting the least of all this; and in particular, the person whom he is desirous of pleasing can know the least of this."

I did not know rightly what I should say. I thought that this description was true, and Emilia's fears not unfounded. She continued:

"Yes, if one had known and seen one another for ten years, especially if one had travelled together—for on a journey one is not so much on one's guard, and shows one's natural character and temper—then one might know tolerably well what a man is."

"That method," said I, "would be tiresome and difficult enough, however excellent one might find it; and would at furthest only be suitable for lovers during the time of the Crusades. In our days, people walk in Queen-street and drive at farthest to Norrtull. One cannot diverge more than that. During this ramble, people see the world, and are seen by them; people greet, and are greeted; people talk, and joke, and laugh, and find one another so agreeable, that after the little journey, they feel no more indecision about undertaking the great journey through life. But now, to talk seriously, have you never spoken openly with Algernon on the subjects on which you consider it so important to know his opinions?"

"Yes, many times," replied Emilia, "especially since we

have been betrothed; and I have always found, or have fancied I have found, in him, the opinions and feelings which I wished—but ah! I may so easily have blinded myself, because I secretly wished it. Possibly, also, Algernon, in his zeal to please me, has deceived himself regarding himself. I am resolved to make use of all my observation to discover the reality and truth, during the short time which remains to me of my freedom, and shall not, if I can help it, through wilful blindness, make him and me unhappy. Granted even that he were quite perfect, yet he might not be suitable for me, nor I for him; our tempers and characters might at bottom be wholly unaccordant.”

Amid all these troubling conjectures Emilia was dressed, and one was obliged to acknowledge that her dress did not become her. She closed the conversation by saying—“I wish sometimes that I really were married; then I should escape plaguing myself with the thought about marrying.”

“Inconsistency of the human mind,” thought I.

At dinner Emilia’s toilet was universally blamed, especially by the Cornet. Julie was silent, but spoke with her eyes. The Colonel said nothing; but observed Emilia with a rather sarcastic mien, which made her blush.

After dinner Julie said to Emilia—“Sweet Emilia, I did not mean that Algernon really would not think you quite amiable if you were dressed in sackcloth and ashes; I would merely say, that it is not right if a bride does not endeavour in all ways to please her bridegroom. I meant that it would be right—that it would be wrong—that it——”

Here Julie lost the thread of her demonstration, and was almost as embarrassed as a certain burgomaster who was in the same predicament. Emilia pressed her hand kindly, and said, “You have, and that quite happily, followed out your principles; for I have seldom seen you better dressed, and, beyond that, more charming, than you look to-day, and certainly Arvid will think so.”

Julie blushed, but had more pleasure in these words of her sister than she would have felt in a compliment from her bridegroom.

Towards evening, all the bustle in the house was ended, all resumed its former excellent order; and her Honour was also at rest.

Algernon and Lieutenant Arvid arrived at tea-time. Emilia and Julie blushed like June roses ; the first looked down, and the latter looked up.

Algernon looked so happy to see Emilia again, was so occupied with her alone, gave so little attention to her toilet, which he did not honour with a glance, but was evidently so charmed, so happy, and so amiable, that by degrees the joy which beamed from his eyes kindled a sympathetic glance in Emilia's, and, spite of dress, apron, and comb, she was during this evening so charming and agreeable that Julie forgave the toilet.

Lieutenant Arvid was no less delighted with his little amiable bride ; although it seemed to be no affair of his to express it, like Algernon, in lively and select language. Eloquence is not given to all, and every one has his own way. He drank tea, three cups, ate a dozen rusks, kissed the hand of his bride, and looked entirely happy. I heard him say several times, "The devil fetch me!" and was obliged to concede that a handsome mouth and pleasant voice could soften the unpleasantness of ugly words. Lieutenant Arvid is, in truth, an Adonis.—N.B. An Adonis with a moustache.

His countenance expressed goodness and honesty, but (I beg him a thousand times pardon) something also of foolishness and self-love. His handsome head of twenty did not seem to entertain many ideas.

Algernon had a remarkably noble exterior, in which manliness, goodness, and intelligence, were the chief characteristics. He was tall, had regular, handsome features, and a most agreeable and distinguished deportment.

How, methought I, can Emilia cast her eye upon that noble countenance, and not feel all her fears, all her anxieties, vanish ?

For this evening they did vanish, or withdrew into the soul's darkest background. The whole family seemed to be happy, and all was joy and life.

The blind girl, on this evening, did not appear in the company.

FIVE DAYS BEFORE THE BRIDAL.

SPITE of her joy and the satisfaction with which Monday came to an end, Emilia woke on Tuesday morning with the exclamation, "Now one day less till the horrible day!"

Beautiful presents from Algernon came in during the forenoon. Emilia did not like the custom of the bridegroom making presents to his beloved.

"It is a barbarian custom," said she, "which turns woman into a piece of merchandise, which the husband, as it were, buys. It ought to be enough to make all civilised nations abandon the usage, when they know it to be the custom of all savage and barbarous people."

Besides this, she found in some of the presents too little regard paid to the useful, too much of luxury and the merely showy.

"If he be only not a spendthrift!" said she, sighing. "How little he knows me, if he thinks that I love jewels better than the flowers given by him. However much I love the graceful and the elegant, I am but little attracted by outward magnificence, by pomp and splendour. Besides, these are not suitable for our circumstances."

Emilia's good-humour was over; she scarcely noticed the presents, over which Julie could not cease to exclaim, "Enchanting! charmant!" Through the whole forenoon she never took the curl-papers from her hair, and went about wrapped in a great shawl, which hung awry. The Cornet compared her to a Hottentot, and besought her not to fancy that, although she was surrounded by "savage and barbarous customs," she could turn a savage. When we went down to dinner, I said to her, in order to act my part as a skilful and worthy commendator, how uncommonly handsome and charming I thought Algernon.

"Yes," replied Emilia, "he is very handsome, much handsomer as man than I am as woman, and this I consider a real misfortune."

"See then," thought I, "now I have run again upon a sandbank!"

Emilia continued. "It is rare that a remarkably handsome

exterior does not make him who possesses it vain ; and the most unbearable thing that I know is a man who is in love with his own person. He commonly thinks it to be the first duty of his less handsome wife to honour and to worship his beauty and his amiability. Vanity lessens women, but degrades men. According to my opinion, the exterior of a man is of little or of no consequence to his wife. I should be able, I am convinced, to worship a noble Esop, and would have him a thousand times rather than an Adonis. A Narcissus, who worships his own image, is what I find most disgusting."

As Emilia spoke these last words she opened the drawing-room door. Algernon was alone in the room, and stood—before the glass! observing himself, as it seemed, with great attention. One should have seen how Emilia blushed, and with what a demeanour she received her bridegroom ; who, on his part, confounded by her confusion and her amazed appearance, perhaps also somewhat embarrassed at having been caught in his *tête-à-tête* with the glass, was completely out of countenance. It was now my business to support the conversation with remarks on the weather, the roads, and so on.

Fortunately now came in the rest of the family, which made a wholesome diversion.

Emilia continued to look troubled ; and as he looked at her, Algernon's countenance became dark by degrees. I thought I remarked that he had a sty on his left eye, and thought it probable that this had occasioned his *tête-à-tête* in the glass, but Emilia would not see it. Various trifles contributed to make the understanding worse between the two lovers. Algernon accidentally discovered that he had pleasure in things which did not please Emilia, and he let Emilia's favourite dish pass by him at table. Emilia found out, of a certainty, that they did not in the least sympathise. Algernon made a true but not biting observation, without particular application, about ill-temper and the disagreeables of it. Nevertheless, it should not have been said at this time. Emilia applied it to herself, and assumed more of a genteel and dignified demeanour. Julie was anxious. "It would be much better," said she, "that they should quarrel with one another, than that they should sit and be silent and inwardly angry."

Cornet Carl went to Emilia and said, "My gracious sister, I pray you do not sit there like the Chinese Wall, impenetrable to all the arrows which Algernon's loving eyes shoot at you. Look, if you can, a little less icy. Look at Algernon; go to him, and give him a kiss!" But there seemed no chance of that; sooner might one have expected to see the Chinese Wall set itself in motion. Emilia did not look at Algernon, who seemed infinitely to long after reconciliation. He proposed that they should sing together a newly-published Italian duet, probably in the hope that the soul of the harmony should chase away all hostile and ungentle feelings which disturbed the peace between him and his beloved; and that the duet's "*Cor mio mio ben*" would soon also tone into her heart. Vain hope! Emilia excused herself with having a headache—and that was true, as I could see by her eyes. Her head soon ached when she was troubled and disquieted. Algernon fancied the headache a fiction; and without troubling himself about his bride, who sate in a corner of the sofa, supporting her head on her hands, made known his intention of hearing Mozart's Figaro at the opera, bowed hastily to all, and went out.

The evening crept on slowly. Nobody was in a good or gay humour. Every one saw that Emilia suffered, therefore no one expressed any displeasure at her conduct.

The Colonel alone seemed to remark nothing, and quietly laid his patience.

As we separated for the night, the Cornet said to me in a whisper, "It is quite dreadful! To-morrow we must fire off a whole battery of distractions."

Wednesday came. Algernon rose early. His look was so tender, his voice so full of fervency when he talked to Emilia, that she thawed, and tears filled her eyes. All was right between the lovers. Nobody knew how or wherefore, not even themselves.

This day went quietly over, with the exception of two frights which Emilia had, and yet survived. The first occurred in the forenoon, during a conversation which Algernon had with "her Honour." Emilia heard expressions from him which convinced her for the moment that he was nothing less than the greatest miser on the earth. Fortunately she found soon afterwards that he merely quoted a word of a

Harpagon of his acquaintance, at which he himself heartily laughed. Emilia breathed again, and joined him. The second happened in the afternoon, during a serious conversation which some of us carried on, sitting in a window in the clear moonlight, while I asserted, "There are, nevertheless, noble and good people who are yet unfortunate enough to have no faith in another life, in no higher object of our existence. These are to be pitied, not to be blamed." With an indescribable expression of anxiety in her beautiful eyes, Emilia looked questioninglly at me. Her thought was, "Is it Algernon whom you would excuse?" I replied to her, by turning her attention to Algernon, who, at my words, cast a glance up to the star-spangled heaven—and this glance was an expression of beautiful and firm hope. Emilia looked up also with thankfulness; and as their eyes met, they beamed with tenderness and joy.

This day was about to close so well. Ah! why during supper did Algernon receive a note; why during the reading look confused, and immediately lose much of his gaiety; why so hastily, and without saying anything, go out?

Yes, why? Nobody knows that; but many of us would gladly have given our lives to know it.

"Yet it never can occur to you to think ill of Algernon on account of that note?" said Julie to Emilia, as they went to bed.

"Good night, Julie!" said Emilia, sighing.

Emilia had no good night.

Thursday. Clouds and mists around Emilia. Vain attempts on our part to dissipate them. Immediately after breakfast, the Cornet took the field with Napoleon and Charles the Twelfth. Emilia would not contend; Julie and Helena laboured in vain to enliven her. I ventured not on my part to say one single word. The note, the note, lay in the way of everything.

At twelve o'clock Algernon came. He looked very much heated, and there was something uncommonly bright in his eyes. Emilia had promised him on the preceding day to drive out with him in an open sledge; he came now to fetch her. A handsome sledge, furnished with magnificent rein-deer skins, stood at the door. Emilia declined to go with him, coldly and resolutely. "Why?" asked Algernon. "On ac-

count of the note," Emilia might have answered with truth ; but she said :

"I wish to remain at home."

"Are you unwell?"

"No."

"Why will you not give me the pleasure of driving out with me as you promised?"

"The note, the note," thought Emilia; but she only reddened, and said :

"I wish to remain at home."

Algernon was angry ; he reddened hotly, and his eyes flashed. He went out, banging the door somewhat violently after him.

The servant who was left at the door with the sledge had in the mean time left it. The horse, terrified by a fall of snow, and left to himself, backed, threw down an old woman, and would probably have set off, if Algernon, who just then came down, had not thrown himself forward and seized the reins with a powerful hand. After the horse was pacified, he called a man who was near, to whom he gave it to hold, and hastened himself to lift up the old woman, who was so frightened as not to be able to move, but who fortunately was not hurt in the least. He talked with her a little while, and gave her money.

To his servant, who came at length, he gave a box on the ear, threw himself into the sledge, took the reins himself, and drove off like lightning.

Emilia, quite pale, had stood by me at the window, and had observed this scene ; at the last part of it she exclaimed :

"He is violent, passionate, mad !" And she burst into tears.

"He has," said I, "human weaknesses ; and that is all. He came here in an excited and uneasy state of mind ; your refusal to fulfil your promise, and without assigning any reason for it, would naturally provoke him ; the negligence of his servant, which had nearly occasioned a misfortune, increased his warmth, which, nevertheless, only showed itself by a box on the ear, very well deserved. It is too much to expect from a young man that he should conduct himself perfectly coolly and calmly when one vexation after another sets his temper in a ferment. It is sufficient that

during his passion he continues as humane and good, as we saw Algernon just now towards the old woman. Besides, I believe, Emilia, that if you, instead of exciting Algernon's temper by ill-humour and unkindness (pardon me the two beautiful words), would use for good purpose the great power which we all of us have seen that you have over him, then you would never see him passionate and mad, as you call it."

I was much pleased with my little speech when I had ended it, and thought it would have a wonderfully great influence; but Emilia was silent, and looked unhappy.

Algernon did not return to dinner.

Cornet Carl related in the afternoon that he had heard from a comrade of his, of a duel which had taken place in the morning. One of the duellists was Algernon's best friend, and he had invited him to be his second. He had done this by a note (the Cornet said, with an emphatic voice) which was delivered here in this house, where Algernon was then last evening about a quarter to ten. Algernon had done all that was possible to prevent the duel—but in vain. The parties met, and Algernon's friend had dangerously wounded his enemy. The particulars were unknown to the Cornet.

Now was all explained, and Algernon's image stood bright before Emilia.

Algernon came towards evening. He was quite calm, but grave; and did not go as usual to sit beside his bride. Emilia was not gay; she seemed to fear making the first step towards reconciliation; and yet showed, by many little attentions to Algernon, how much she wished to be reconciled to him. She made him tea herself; asked whether he found it sweet enough; whether she might send him another cup; and so on. Algernon remained cold towards her; seemed often to fall into deep thought, and forget where he was. Emilia withdrew herself, wounded; was quite dejected, and sate down at a distance to sew, and for a long time never looked up from her work.

Cornet Carl said to Helena and me, "This is not exactly right; but what in all the world can one do to make it better? I cannot now come forward again with Napoleon and Charles XII. I brought them forward this forenoon, and they did not succeed particularly well. One must confess that Emilia is not an amiable bride. If she be not

different as a wife, then——Should not she go now to Algernon, and try to comfort and to enliven him? See, now she goes. No, it is only to fetch a ball of cotton. Poor Algernon! I begin to think that it is a real good fortune for me to be so devoid of feeling. Poor lovers suffer worse hardships than we soldiers taking our degrees. If I were a bridegroom.——God bless you, little Claes, what is it you want—a rusk? Go to Emilia, go to Emilia. I have no rusks. Yes, it will do her highness a little good to be interrupted.”

The Cornet did not see how entirely humble her highness was this evening at the bottom of her heart; and that Algernon was now most to blame for the coldness which continued between them.

Algernon and Emilia did not approach one another this evening, and parted coldly—at least apparently so.

On Friday morning Emilia determined to make an end of their engagement. Algernon was noble, excellent; but he was too stern, and he did not love her. That she had plainly seen on the preceding evening. She would have an especial conversation with him, and so on. Algernon came. He was much gayer than on the foregoing day, and seemed to wish that all disagreeables should be forgotten. Emilia was in the beginning solemn in the thoughts of her important intention; but Julie, Helena, her Honour, Cornet Carl, and I, bustled so about her, and we by degrees dragged her into our whirlpool, and prevented her both from private conversation and inward cogitation. After a while her hearty laugh was again heard, and her thoughtfulness did not relapse into melancholy.

In the afternoon of this day the marriage contract was signed.

Even the bride of Sir Charles Grandison, the beautiful Harriet Byron, dropped (so they say) the pen which she had taken to sign her marriage contract, and had scarcely strength and presence of mind to subscribe her fate. Millions of young brides have trembled at this moment, and behaved like her; what wonder then if the fearful and bashful Emilia was almost out of herself for terror? The pen did not only fall out of her hand, but made a great black blot upon the important paper, which she at that moment regarded as an

omen of misfortune ; and I doubt whether she now would have signed it, had not the Colonel (exactly like Sir Charles) taken the pen, set it between her fingers, signed and guided her trembling hand.

In the evening, when we were alone in our chamber, Emilia said, with a deep sigh :

“ It must now take place ! It cannot be helped any longer ; and the day after to-morrow he will take me away from all whom I love so fervently.”

“ One might believe,” said Julie, smiling, but with tears in her eyes, “ that you were going to travel to the end of the world ; and yet only a few streets and market-places will separate us from you, and we can see each other every day.”

“ Every day ? Yes,” said Emilia, weeping ; “ but not as now, every hour.”

On Saturday, Emilia was kind and affectionate to every one, but dejected and uneasy, and seemed to wish to escape from the thoughts which pursued her everywhere.

Algernon became graver every moment, and observed his bride with troubled and searching looks. It seemed as if he feared that with her hand she did not give him her whole heart ; yet, nevertheless, he seemed to shun any kind of explanation, and avoided being alone with Emilia.

I had heard from a cousin of the cook’s step-sister’s sister-in-law, that Algernon had distributed among several poor families money and victuals ; with the observation, that on the Sunday they should have a good dinner, and make merry. I related this to Emilia, who on her part had done the same. This sympathy in their thoughts rejoiced her, and gave her again courage.

In the mean time, people on all sides had sewed and worked industriously, so that, the day before the wedding, all was ready and in order.

There was something solemn in the adieus of the evening. Every one embraced Emilia, and tears were in all eyes. Emilia overcame her emotion, but could not speak. All thought upon the morrow.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

THE great, the expected, the dreaded day came at length. Emilia, scarcely arisen, looked with a foreboding glance up to heaven. It was overcast with grey clouds. The air was cold and damp; everything which one could see from the window bore that melancholy stamp which on the cold winter-day weighs both upon the animate and the inanimate. The smoke which ascended from the chimneys was depressed again, and rolled itself slowly over the roofs, blackening their white snow-covering. Some old women, with red noses and blue cheeks, drove their milk-carts to the market, step by step, dragged by lean horses, which hung their rough heads nearer than common to the earth. Even the little sparrows seemed not to be in their usual lively tempers; they sate still, and clung together along the roof-spouts, without twittering or pecking. Now and then one of them stretched their wings and opened their little bills, but it was done evidently out of weariness. Emilia sighed deeply. A bright heaven, a little sunshine, would have cheered and refreshed her depressed mind. Who does not wish that a bright sun may beam on their bridal-day? It seems to us as if Hymen's torch could not clearly burn if it be not kindled by the bright light of the beams of heaven. A secret belief that Heaven does not look with indifference on our earthly fate remains constantly in the depths of our hearts; and though we may be dust and atoms, yet we see, when the eternal vault is dimmed by clouds, or shines in splendour, in this change always some sympathy or some foreboding which concerns us, and often, very often, are our hopes and our fears—children of winds and clouds.

Emilia, after a sleepless night, and depressed by the events of the preceding day, was quite dispirited by this dull morning. She complained of headache; and after she had at breakfast embraced her parents and her brother and sisters, she requested that she might pass the forenoon alone in her own room. It was allowed. The Colonel looked more serious than common. Her Honour had so troubled a demeanour that it went to my heart to see it. Anxiety and un-

easiness for Emilia, cares and troubles for the wedding dinner, possessed her soul alternately, and all she said began with "Ah!" Neither was the Cornet cheerful; and Helena's expressive countenance had a slight trace of sorrow. Julie was inexpressibly amazed that a wedding-day could begin so gloomily, and changed her countenance incessantly, which was now ready to weep and now to laugh. Only Mr. Magister and the Dumplings were in their usual state of mind. The former bit his nails, and was silent and looked up in the air; the latter never left off breakfast.

I assisted her Honour the whole forenoon, and it was not little which we had to do—in part talking, in part arranging, in part working ourselves and laying to a helping hand. We whipped citron creams, basted the roasts, salted the bouillon, lamented over unlucky pastry, rejoiced over magnificent made-dishes, and burnt our tongues over at least twenty sauces. Oh, those are no poetical flames which Hymen's torch kindles at the kitchen fire!

The Colonel himself prepared the bowls of bishop and punch, and occasioned us no little difficulty and disturbance; so many things, so many people, so much room, did he require for the purpose, and seemed to think that there was nothing else of consequence to be done; which no little angered her Honour. She gave her husband, therefore, a little lecture; and he—he conceded that she was right.

Whilst I instructed the cook on the most elegant manner of serving up a first course, Julie came running into the kitchen with tears in her eyes. "Give me! give me!" exclaimed she, with her customary liveliness, "something good for Emilia; she ate nothing at breakfast, she will be ill; she will die of mere fatigue to-day! What have you here? Boiled eggs! I take two! Glasses of jelly! I take two! I may do so? Ah, a little caprin sauce, that makes one lively—and now a little bit of fish or meat to it, and a few French rolls—see! now some tarts—now then I am pleased. Emilia likes sweet things!—Do you know what she is doing, Beata?" she continued, in a whisper: "she prays to God. I have peeped in through the keyhole; she is on her knees, praying. God bless her!" and bright pearls ran down Julie's cheeks as she hastened out with these plates full, which she carried I cannot conceive how.

At length our arrangements came to an end ; all was now left, together with the necessary instructions, in the hands of the servants and the Colonel. Her Honour and I went to dress for dinner.

Somewhat later I went in to Emilia. She stood before a glass, dressed in her bridal robe, and contemplated herself with a look which expressed neither that pleasure nor that self-satisfaction which a handsome and well-dressed woman almost always feels in the contemplation of her beloved I. Helena clasped her bracelet ; and Julie was kneeling as she arranged some of the lace trimming. "Look," exclaimed Julie, as I entered the room, "is she not sweet ?—is she not lovely ?—and yet," added she in a whisper, "I would give half of that which I possess to purchase for her another aspect ; she looks as troubled and as grey as the weather !" Emilia, who heard her sister's words, said, "One cannot look gay when one is not happy. Everything seems to me so heavy, so unbearable ! This day is a horrible day. I would willingly die !"

"Good heavens !" said Julie to me, wringing her hands ; "now she begins to cry. She will have red eyes and a red nose, and will not be handsome again. What shall we do ?"

"Dear Emilia," said Helena, mildly, as she raised the hand of her sister to her lips, "are not you a little foolish ! This marriage is your own wish, as well as all our wishes. According to all by which human nature can form a judgment, you will be happy. Has not Algernon the noblest qualities ? Does he not love you most tenderly ? Where would you find a husband who would be for your parents a more affectionate son—for your brother and sisters a more devoted brother ?"

"All this is true, Helena ; or rather, all this seems like truth. But ah ! when I think that I now stand at the point of changing my whole existence—that I shall leave my parents—leave you, my good, my affectionate sisters—that home, where I have been so happy—and this for the sake of a man whose heart I do not know as I know yours ; whose conduct may change towards me, who may make me unhappy in so many ways. And this man will be in the future everything to me—my fate must be irrevocably bound to his. Ah ! my sisters, when I think on all this, it becomes dark before

my eyes. I feel my knees tremble ; and when I think that it is to-day—to-day—within a few hours, which shall decide my fate ; and that I still have freedom, still can withdraw—then I feel the pang of indecision, of uncertainty, which nobody can conceive. Beata, my sisters, never marry!”

“But, sweetest Emilia,” began Helena again, “you who find it so easy to submit to necessity, think only that your fate is already decided, that it is already too late for you to renounce your own happiness.”

“Too late!” exclaimed Emilia, without regarding the last word. “Too late is it not, as long as the priest has not united us. Yes, even at the foot of the altar I have the right, and can——”

“And would you have the heart to do it?” interrupted Julie, in the most tragic tone ; “would you drive Algernon to despair? You would actually——”

“A scene!” said a voice in the doorway ; and the Colonel, with his arms folded, observing Julie with his comic look, whose attitude was not unlike that for which the celebrated Mademoiselle George is applauded in Semiramis and Maria Stuart. Julie reddened, but still more Emilia.

The Cornet, who followed his father, presented to his sister, from Algernon, some fresh, beautiful flowers, together with a note, which contained lines which were anything but cold and unmeaning. Emilia’s countenance cleared up—she pressed her brother’s hand. He threw himself on his knee, in a rapture of knightly enthusiasm, and prayed for the favour of kissing the toe of her shoe. She extended to him, with a gracious mien, her little foot ; and while he bent himself down, not as I thought to kiss the shoe-toe, but to bite it in two, she threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him heartily. The Colonel took her hand, led her into the middle of the room, and we all made a circle around her. When she saw her affectionate father’s glances, and ours full of joy and love, riveted upon her, she was possessed by pleasant feelings, blushed, and was as lovely as even Julie could have wished. Her dress was simple, but in the highest degree tasteful and elegant. For those of my young readers who wish to know something more of her toilet, here it is. She had on a white silk dress, trimmed with lace ; and her light and beautiful hair, adorned with the green

myrtle crown, over which a veil (Helena's lovely work) was thrown in a picturesque manner, and which gave to her gentle and innocent countenance much resemblance to a Madonna of Paul Veronese. In order to make her enchanting, there failed only the expression of happiness, hope, and love, the most excellent ornament of the bride.

In the mean time, her heart seemed to have become somewhat lighter; and, as if in harmony with her feelings, the sun broke forth from the clouds, and threw his pale beams into the room.

The outward, as well as the inward brightness, lasted but for a moment. It darkened again. As we went down to dinner, Julie showed to me with a lamenting look, that all that which she had carried up for Emilia was untouched—only one glass of jelly was emptied.

At dinner, Emilia looked around her at all those whom she should so soon leave; and her heart swelled, and tears incessantly filled her eyes. At dinner, nobody seemed to have their customary liveliness, and nobody seemed to eat with any appetite, with the exception always of the Magister and the Dumplings. Emilia, who seemed more dejected under the myrtle crown than ever was king under the diadem, ate nothing; and did not laugh once during the dinner, spite of the excellent occasions for so doing, which were given to her by three remarkable pieces of absence of mind of the Magister, at which not even the Colonel could avoid smiling. The first was, that he mistook his snuff-box for the salt-cellar, both of which stood beside him on the table; scattered a portion of snuff in his soup, and took a considerable pinch out of the salt-cellar, which caused him to make many strange grimaces, and to shed many tears. The second was, that in order to dry these, he, instead of his pocket-handkerchief, seized hold on one corner of her Honour's shawl; which she, however, snatched from him with haste and horror. The third was, that he bowed and was ceremonious to the servant who offered him meat; and prayed that the young lady would be so good as to help herself. Julie looked troubled in the extreme at her sister. "She neither eats nor laughs," whispered she to me; "it is quite sad!"

But it was more sad in the afternoon, when the guests who were invited collected; and Algernon, who was expected

early, was not heard of at all. Her Honour wept, looking incessantly at the door, with the most uneasy countenance in the world; and came to me three or four times, only to say, "I cannot conceive why Algernon delays so!" The guests, who had arrived, asked also after him. Emilia asked not, did not look at the door; but one could very plainly see how, with every moment, she became more serious and pale. Julie seated herself near me; told me who the guests were as they arrived, and added thereto some observations. "That handsome, well-grown lady, who carries herself so well, is the Baroness S——. Who, indeed, would believe, that every time she enters a drawing-room she is so embarrassed that she trembles? Look at her intellectual eyes, but trust them not; she can talk of nothing but the weather, and at home she yawns all day to herself. Who comes now, and holds his hat in so beggar-like a manner before him, as he comes through the door? Ha, ha! Uncle P——. That is a good old fellow, but he is lethargic; I shall give him a kiss instead of a farthing. God grant only that he do not snore during the ceremony. Look at my Arvid, Beata! there by the stove. Is he not an Apollo? I think that he warms himself too much at his own convenience—he seems altogether to have forgotten that there is anybody in the room. That is my cousin, Mrs. M——, who is now come in. She is an angel; and the little delicate person encloses a large soul.

"Look how Emilia receives them all; altogether as if she would say, 'You are very good, gentlemen and ladies, who come to witness my funeral.' I cannot conceive what Algernon is thinking about that he is so long. Gracious heavens! how unhappy Emilia looks.

"See, there is the clergyman. Spite of his warts and his red eyes, he looks good; I feel, as it were, respect for him.

"Look how Carl tries to enliven and to occupy Emilia. Well done, brother; but it helps nothing.

"Now, thank God, here is Algernon at last. But how pale and serious he looks! And yet he is handsome. He goes up to her—see only how proud her demeanour is. He excuses himself, I fancy. What! he has had a horrible toothache—has just had a tooth out! Poor Algernon! Toothache on his wedding-day! What a fate! See now,

they all sit in a circle. A circle of sitting people gives me the vapours! What do they talk about? I fancy really that they talk about the weather. A most interesting subject, that is certain! But it is not very enlivening. Hark! how snow and rain patter against the windows. It is horribly warm here, and Emilia contributes to make the atmosphere heavy. I must go and speak to her."

Soon afterwards, some one came in, and said that people were crowding on the steps and in the hall, wishing to see the bride.

New torment for the bashful Emilia. She rose, but sate down again quickly, turning quite pale. "Eau-de-Cologne! eau-de-Cologne!" cried Julie to me; "she grows pale, she faints!" "Water!" exclaimed the Colonel, with thundering voice. The Magister took up the tea-kettle, and rushed forward with it. I know not whether it was the sight of this, or some effort of the soul to control her excited feelings, which enabled Emilia to overcome her weakness. She collected herself quickly, and went out, accompanied by her sisters, whilst she cast a glance of uneasiness and displeasure upon Algernon, who stood immovable at a distance, observing her with an usually, almost severe gravity.

"Are you mad!" exclaimed Uncle P——, half aloud, and seized the Magister by the arm, who now stood with bewildered eyes, and the tea-kettle in his hand. The Magister, terrified, turned himself round hastily and stumbled over "the Dumplings," who fell one over the other like two ninepins which the ball has struck. The tea-kettle in the hand of the Magister wagged about, burnt his fingers, and he dropped it with a cry of pain on the unlucky little ones, over whose immovable bodies a cloud of whirling steam ascended. If the moon had fallen down, it could not have occasioned a greater confusion than at the first moment of this catastrophe with the tea-kettle. Axel and Claes uttered no sound, and her Honour was ready to believe that it was all over with the little Dumplings. But after Algernon and the Colonel had lifted them up, and shook them, it was perceived that they were perfectly alive. They were only so astonished, frightened, so out of themselves, that at the first moment they could neither move nor speak. Fortunately, the hot water wherewith they were wetted had for the greater part

run upon their clothes; besides this, it was probably somewhat cooled, because people had left off drinking tea for half an hour. Only one spot upon Axel's forehead and Claes' left hand required looking after. The Magister was in despair—the little ones cried. They were put to bed in a room, in which I promised to spend as much time with them as I had to dispose of. Her Honour, whose amiable kindness would not quietly permit there to be an unhappy face near her, next consoled the Magister. She succeeded best in so doing, by calling upon him to observe with what a true Spartan courage the little boys had borne the first shock, and she regarded it as a remarkable proof of the excellent education he had given them. The Magister was quite happy, and quite warm, and drawing himself up, said that he hoped to bring up her Honour's sons as real Spartans. Her Honour hoped that this would not be done by renewed shower-baths of boiling water; but she was silent as regarded her hope.

In the mean time, the exhibition of the bride was ended; and Emilia, fatigued, left the room where, according to the customary, strange, but old usage of Sweden, she had been compelled to show herself to a crowd of curious and indifferent people.

"They did not think her handsome," said Julie to me, in a doleful tone; "and that was not extraordinary; she was dark and cold as an autumn sky."

We had conducted Emilia to a distant room, in order that she might rest a moment. She sank down in a chair, put her handkerchief before her face, and was silent.

Everything in the drawing-room was ready for the ceremony. They waited only for Emilia.

"Smell at the eau-de-Cologne, Emilia! Sweet Emilia, drink a glass of water," prayed Julie, who now began to tremble.

"They wait for you, best Emilia," said Cornet Carl, who now came into the room, and offered to conduct his sister out. "I cannot—I really cannot go," said Emilia, with a voice expressive of the deepest distress.

"You cannot!" exclaimed the Cornet, with the greatest astonishment. "Why?" And he looked inquiringly at us

all. Julie stood in a tragic attitude, with her hands clasped above her head. Helena sat with an expression of displeasure upon her placid countenance; and I—I cannot possibly remember what I did; but in my heart I sympathised with Emilia. None of us answered.

“No, I cannot go,” continued Emilia, with emphasis altogether unusual. “I cannot take this oath, which is binding for ever. I have a positive foreboding—we shall be unhappily united—we are not suited for each other. It may be my fault—but it is, for all that, certain. At this moment he is certainly displeased with me—looks upon me as a whimsical being—thinks with repugnance of uniting his destiny with such a one. His severe glance says all this to me. He may be right, perfectly right; and therefore it is best for him, as for me, that we now separate.”

“But Emilia!” exclaimed her brother, “do you think on what you are saying? It is now too late. The clergyman is really here—the bridal guests—Algernon——”

“Go to him, dear Carl,” exclaimed Emilia, with increasing emotion; “pray him to come here; I will myself talk to him, tell him all. It cannot be too late when it concerns the peace and happiness of a whole life. Go, I beseech of you, go!”

“Good heavens! Good heavens! What will be the end of it?” said Julie; and looked as if she would call heaven and earth to help. “Think on papa, Emilia!”

“I shall throw myself at his feet—he will not wish the eternal unhappiness of his child!”

“If we could divert her mind from this—occupy her for a moment with anything else!” whispered Helena to her brother.

Cornet Carl opened the door, as if to go out; and at the same moment we heard the sound of a heavy blow. “Ah, my eye!” cried the Cornet. A universal terror took place, because this little deceit was played off so naturally that at the first moment none of us thought that it was a trick.

Emilia, always ready to be the first to hasten to the help of others, was the same now, spite of her own great uneasiness, and rushed to her brother with a pocket-handkerchief dipped in cold water; drew his hand from his eye, and began

with fervency and anxiety to bathe it, whilst she asked with uneasiness, "Is it very bad? Do you think the eye is injured? Fortunately there is no blood——"

"It is perhaps therefore the more dangerous," said the Cornet, drily; but an unfortunate treacherous smile nullified at the same moment the whole guile. Emilia observed it nearer, and quite convinced herself that the blow was anything but real. "Ah!" said she, "I see what it is. It is one of your jokes; but it will not mislead me. I pray, I conjure you, Carl, if you have the least affection for me, go to Algernon; tell him that I beseech for a few minutes' conversation with him."

"That none of you had the *présence d'esprit* to blow out the candle!" exclaimed the Cornet, and looked angrily at us, especially at me. Helena whispered something to him, and he went out of the room, followed by Julie.

Helena and I were silent, whilst Emilia, in evident anguish of mind, paced up and down the room, and seemed to talk to herself. "What shall I do? How shall I act?" said she several times, half aloud. We now heard footsteps in the next room. "He comes!" said Emilia; and her whole frame trembled. The door opened, and Algernon, no, the Colonel entered, with an expression of imposing gravity. Emilia gasped for breath, seated herself, rose up again, grew pale, and crimsoned.

"You have waited too long for yourself," said he, calmly, but not without severity; "I now come to fetch you."

Emilia clasped her hands, looked beseechingly up to her father, opened her lips, but closed them again, discouraged by the stern, grave expression of his countenance; and as he took her hand, all power of resistance seemed to abandon her; and with a sort of despairing submission, she arose and allowed her father to lead her out. Helena and I followed them.

The drawing-room was strongly lighted, and all the assembled company had their eyes directed to the door through which Emilia, conducted by her father, entered.

She has told me since then that at her entrance she could not have distinguished one single object, and that everything was black before her eyes. "Then it is not wonderful," said

her brother, "that you looked as if you were walking in your sleep."

Algernon regarded her with a seriousness which at this moment did not inspire her with courage.

Neither of them spoke. The drama began. The young couple stood before the clergyman. Emilia was pale as death, and trembled. Julie altogether lost heart. "It is terrible!" said she, and was nearly as pale as her sister.

Now the voice was heard which announced their holy duties to the young married pair. The voice was deep and well-toned, and seemed to be animated by a divine spirit. It spoke of the sanctity of the state of wedlock, and the mutual obligations of the husband and wife to love one another, to lighten to each other the fatigues of life, to soften its appointed cares, to be an ensample to each other in a true fear of God; it spoke of those prayers for each other which unite so inwardly, which draw them towards the eternal First Cause; of how the highest felicity on earth is assisted by a union which in this way is begun and continued in the will of God—and then called down the blessing of the Most High upon the young married pair. Those words, so pleasant, so beautiful, so peaceful, awoke in every breast quiet and holy emotions. All was so still in the room, that one might have thought that nobody was in it. I saw plainly that Emilia became calmer every moment. The few words which she had to say she spoke out intelligibly, and with a firm voice. Whilst she knelt, it seemed to me that she prayed with hope and devotion. I cast, in the mean time, abundant glances around me. The Colonel was paler than common, but contemplated the young couple with an expression full of composure and tenderness. Her Honour wept, and looked not up from her pocket-handkerchief. Julie was greatly affected, although she moved neither hand nor foot. Helena looked up to heaven, with prayers in her bright eyes. The Cornet was at some trouble to make it appear that it was something else beside tears which made his eyes so red; the blind girl smiled quietly; the remainder of the spectators seemed more or less affected, especially the Magister, who alone, towards the close of the ceremony, interrupted the silence by blowing his nose aloud. Fortunately he had his pocket-handkerchief.

The blessings were spoken over the bridal pair by a voice as delightful and majestic as if it had come from heaven. The marriage was ended. Emilia and Algernon were united for ever. Emilia turned round to embrace her parents. She seemed to me to be quite another person. A mild beaming glory seemed to rest upon her brow, and smiled from her eyes; a clear and warm crimson glowed upon her cheeks. She was all at once changed to the ideal of a young and happy bride.

"Heaven be praised! Heaven be praised!" whispered Julie, with tears in her eyes, and clasped her hands; "now all is right!"

"Yes, now it can no longer be helped!" said the Colonel, endeavouring to control his emotion and to assume his comic expression; "now you are fast—now you can no more say 'No!'"

"I shall not wish to do so any more," replied Emilia, smiling charmingly, and looking up to Algernon with an expression which called forth in his countenance a lively and pure delight. A sentiment of satisfaction and cheerfulness diffused itself through the company. Every one looked as if they had a mind to sing and dance. Uncle P——, who was wide awake, called for a quadrille, and stamped his feet merrily by the side of the elegant Baroness S——, who, zephyr-like, floated up and across the floor. Julie and Arvid distinguished themselves in the dance in a charming manner; all eyes were riveted on this attractive couple. I danced with the Magister, who invited me as I hope—not out of absence of mind. We distinguished ourselves, though in a peculiar manner.

It seemed to me as if we were a pair of billiard balls, which perpetually lay ready to jostle each other. Certain it is, that we were in part pushed, and in part pushed others continually, which I particularly attribute to my cavalier's incessantly confusing left and right, as well as all the figures of the quadrille. In the mean time we laughed as well and as loudly as the others at our droll skippings about, and the Magister said that he had never before danced such a lively *waltz*!

Helena played on the piano for the dancing. Emilia did not wish to dance; she sate in a little boudoir, the doors of

which opened into the dancing-room. Algernon was at her side. They talked low, with animation and affection in their looks, and I fancy that in this moment the Gordian knot of all misunderstanding, all uncertainty, all uneasiness, all doubt, which hitherto had divided them, was loosened for ever. The mild lustre of one solitary lamp, beaming through its opaque globe, cast magical light over the young married pair, who now seemed to be as happy as they were handsome.

They seemed to forget the whole world around them, but none of the company had forgotten them. Every one threw stolen glances into the boudoir, and smiled. Julie came many times to me, and pointing to the affectionate pair, said, "See, see!"

Later in the evening a great part of the company assembled in the boudoir, and a general conversation ensued.

Some works which had lately been published, and which lay on a table, gave occasion to various observations on their worth, and on reading in general.

"I cannot comprehend," said Uncle P——, speaking in his Finnish dialect, "what is come to me for some time; I am in a common way as wide awake and as lively as a fish, but the moment I cast my eyes into curs—books they drop down directly upon my nose, and I can see nothing of God's gifts."

"Have you pleasure in reading, gracious aunt?" asked Emilia from the Baroness S——.

"Ah, good heavens!" replied she, casting her beautiful eyes up to the ceiling, "I have no time for that, I am so occupied;" and she wrapped carefully around her her magnificent shawl.

"If I should ever marry," said a gentleman of probably sixty years, "I should make it a condition with my wife, that she should never read any other books beside the hymn-book and the cookery-book."

"My late wife read no other books; but then—what a splendid housekeeper she was!" exclaimed Uncle P——, as he dried his eyes and took a pinch of snuff.

"Yes, I cannot conceive, the deuce take me! why ladies now-a-days busy themselves so with reading, the deuce take me! I cannot understand," said Lieutenant Arvid, stretching forth his hand to a plate of confectionery.

Julie cast a bitter glance at her bridegroom, and I fancy that "the deuce take me!" this time struck her as not very agreeable.

"I would," said she, reddening with vexation, "much rather dispense with meat and drink than be deprived of reading. Is there anything which is more ennobling to the soul than the reading of good books? Anything which elevates more the soul—I would say, elevates the thoughts and feelings to——over——to——"

My poor little Julie was never fortunate when she would strike up into the sublime. Her thoughts were rather of the nature of rockets, which mount suddenly upward like glowing rays of fire, but are extinguished in almost the same manner, and lose themselves in ashes.

Cornet Carl hastened to spill a glass of wine and water over Lieutenant Arvid, and pretended that he had interrupted his sister's speech by his exclamation.

"I knew I should do something stupid! I tried to balance the glass upon the point of my thumb. Pardon, brother-in-law, but I fancy that you certainly sate in my way. I had not my arm at liberty——"

"I will certainly take care and not come in your way another time," said Lieutenant Arvid, half merrily and half vexed, as he stood up and dried his coat with his pocket-handkerchief, and out of circumspection took a seat on the other side of the room.

In the mean time Julie could not so quickly get out of her dilemma. The old book-hating gentleman turned himself with great gravity to her, and said:

"I presume that Julie reads, for the most part, moral books and sermons?"

"N—o—, not exactly so much sermons," replied Julie; and, as she just then became aware of the searching glance with which Professor L—— observed her, she crimsoned deeply.

"Probably cousin reads history more?—that is truly a very excellent study."

"Not directly *history*," said Julie, again lively and courageous, "but *histories*, on the contrary, most gladly. Short and good, if my uncle will know for what reading I would willingly resign eating and drinking, then it is—novels."

The old gentleman lifted up his eyes and his hands with an expression of horror. One might have been tempted to believe from his countenance that Rousseau's assertion, "*jamais fille sage n'a lu de romans*," had made him abominate such dangerous reading.

Something of displeasure betrayed itself in almost every one's looks at Julie's candid declaration. The Baroness seemed altogether shocked at her niece. The Professor alone smiled, full of goodness, and the Cornet said, full of zeal :

"It is really not extraordinary that people read such novels as are written now-a-days. Madame De Staël's '*Corinne*' has cost me a sleepless night ; and on account of Sir Walter Scott's '*Rebecca*,' I lost my appetite for three days."

Julie looked at her brother with the greatest amazement. Emilia's mild blue eyes were raised to him inquiringly ; but he thought it best to avoid them.

"My Euphemie shall never read novels," said Baroness S—— ; upon which, she set her lips firmly together, and seated herself higher in the corner of the sofa, and looked down at her handsome shawl.

"Ah, my aunt !" said Mrs. M——, smiling and shaking her head, "but then, what shall she read ?"

"She shall read nothing at all."

"A most excellent idea !" said the old gentleman.

"I think, really," said Algernon, "that it is better to read nothing than to read *only* novels. Novel reading is for the soul what opium is for the body ; an uninterrupted, continued use of it weakens and injures. Pardon, Julie, but I think that a young lady could better employ her time than in devoting it to this reading."

Julie looked as if she had no desire to pardon this remark.

Emilia said, "I think with Algernon, that (especially for young ladies) this reading is far more injurious than useful."

Tears filled Julie's eyes, and she looked at Emilia as if she would say, "Do you set yourself against me ?"

"I confess," said Mrs. M——, "that they may be very injurious if——"

"Injurious !" interrupted the old gentleman, "say destructive, poisonous, ruinous to the very foundation."

Julie laughed. "Best Professor," cried she, "help ! help !

I begin almost to believe that I am a lost and misguided being. Say, I beseech you, something in favour of the novel readers, and then I will give you something good;" and, archly laughing, she held up a garland of confectionery.

"It has, certainly, its good side," replied the Professor, "when it is used with discretion and moderation. For my part, I regard the reading of good novels as one of the most useful, as well as the most agreeable, occupations for young people."

"Hear! hear!" exclaimed Julie, and clapped her hands.

"But that requires reasons, my good sir; it requires reasons!" cried Uncle P——.

"Yes, yes—reasons! reasons!" cried the old gentleman.

"Good novels," continued the Professor, "that is to say such as, like good pictures, represent nature with truth and beauty, possess advantages which are united in no other books in the same degree. They present the history of the human heart; and for what young person, desirous of becoming acquainted with himself and his fellow-beings, is not this of the highest worth and interest? The world is described in its manifold changing shapes in the liveliest manner, and youth sees here, with its own eyes, maps of the land over which it so soon must travel in the long journey through life. The beauty and amiability of every virtue is in novels represented in a poetical and attractive light. The young, glowing mind is charmed with that which is right and good, which, perhaps, under a more grave and severe shape, might have been repulsive.

"In the same manner, also, are vices and meannesses exhibited in all their deformity; and one learns to despise them, even if they be surrounded by the greatness and the pomp of the world, whilst one feels enthusiasm for virtue, even though it struggles under the burden of all the world's miseries.

"The true picture of the reward of the good and the punishment of the bad among men, however little their outward fate may bear traces thereof, is set forth in novels with all the clearness, life, and strength, which one must wish to be given to every moral truth, in order to maintain it rightly and universally attractive, and productive of fruit.

"For the rest, it is natural that noble youth should love

novels as their best friends, in whom they find again all the glowing, great, and beautiful feelings which they cherish in their own hearts, and which have given to them the first heavenly foreknowledge of bliss and immortality."

Julie now started up with warm delight in her charming countenance, went to the Professor, not with the sweetmeat garland, but embraced him with child-like devotion, whilst she said to him, "A thousand thanks! a thousand thanks! I am contented, quite contented."

The old gentleman looked up to heaven and sighed.

Lieutenant Arvid did not look "quite contented," but ate confectionery assiduously.

Uncle P—— slept and nodded; the Cornet declared that it was not in token of approbation.

The Professor looked quite contented, and kissed, with an expression of fatherly kindness, first the hand of the lovely girl, and then her brow.

Lieutenant Arvid pushed away his chair with a great noise; at the same moment the doors of the supper-room opened—supper was announced.

A repast has always its peculiar interest for those who have had to do with its preparation, arrangement, and so on.

Every dish, the child of our care, has its own share of our interest and satisfaction, as it now stands adorned and fascinating upon the table, just about to vanish for ever. Yet one has, on such occasions, a heart of stone; and I am sure that her Honour enjoyed as much as I did seeing how all the delicate fish, middle and after courses, vanished through the mouths of the bridal guests, evidently to their great delight and satisfaction. Her Honour, at ease about Emilia, and seeing how excellently well all was served, did the honours with a satisfaction and cheerfulness which seemed only to be disturbed by thoughts about the little Dumplings.

The bride was gentle and beaming. Algernon seemed to be the happiest of mortals. "Look at Emilia! look at Emilia!" said Cornet Carl, who was my neighbour at table, every ten minutes, "could one really believe that she was the same person who plagued herself and us so for half the day?"

Julie assumed a dignified and proud air towards her lover whenever he spoke to her. He in the end did the same, and pouted, but always with his mouth full.

Uncle P—— dozed with a piece of blanc-mange on his nose, and, amid the talk and laughter of the company, was heard now and then a snore, which sounded like the droning of a bass-viol as an accompaniment to the tweedle-dees of little fiddles.

Towards the close of the repast skåls were drunk, not ceremoniously and tediously, but gaily and heartily. The Magister, warned by the occasion and by the wine, made, glass in hand, the following impromptu in honour of the bridal pair:

Hand about the brimming glasses;
Hurrah! Let us drain the bowl!
Let the foam the ceiling sprinkle;
Happy couple—here's your skål!

Ring the glasses altogeth'er!
May we e'en, as now, be gay;
When, in fifty years, we gladly
Keep your golden bridal-day!

Amid universal laughter and ringing of glasses the skål was drunk. Afterwards one was also drunk for the Magister, who, I am persuaded, now regarded himself as a little Bell-man.*

After supper the most agreeable surprise was prepared for Emilia. Upon a large table in the drawing-room were spread the portraits of her parents and her sisters, painted in oil, and most of them very striking likenesses.

"We shall in this manner all of us accompany thee to thy new home," said the Colonel, embracing her; "yes, yes, thou wilt not get rid of us!"

Sweet tears ran down Emilia's cheeks; she threw her arms around her father, her mother, her sisters, and was not for some time able to thank them. After this the company undertook to make an accurate examination of every portrait, and there was no lack of remarks of every kind. Here they discovered a fault in the nose; here in the eyes, which were too small; here in the mouth, which was too large; besides this, the artists had not laboured to beautify—rather the contrary, and so on.

Poor artists! see, then, the review which censoriousness—

* A celebrated Swedish popular poet.

the most common of all maladies—compels your works to undergo. Poor artists! happy, happy for you, that you are often a little deaf, and are satisfied with the feeling of the money in your pockets and the consciousness of your talent in your souls!

Emilia alone saw no fault. It was precisely her father's look and her mother's smile; her sister Julie's arch countenance, brother Carl's hasty demeanour, Helena's expression of kindness and peace; and the little Dumplings, oh! they were astonishingly like. One felt as if one must give them some barley-sugar.

The poor little Dumplings! burnt and frightened, they had been obliged to leave the feast, about which they had rejoiced for three weeks. During the whole evening some of us had kept stealing up to them with apples, sugar-bread, and so on. The Magister himself at first had been the most industrious upon the stairs; but after he had fallen down three several times upon this path, which was but little known to him, he remained quietly in the drawing-room. Her Honour had, during the evening, said at least six times to me, with an expression of the greatest disquiet, "My poor little boys! I shall positively sit up with them to-night!" And I replied, every time, "That shall not her Honour, but I will sit up with them!" "But you will certainly sleep!" "I shall not sleep, your Honour!" "Parole d'honneur?" "Parole d'honneur, your Honour!" And, chased by the uneasiness of her Honour, I went up to them, before the company had separated, well supplied with packets of plaster, bottles of drops, and sweet things.

The little boys were much pleased with the latter, and enchanted that, merely on their account, a light should be kept burning all the night. The adventure of the evening occupied them greatly, and they had never done informing me how the Magister had knocked them, how they had fallen down, and what they felt and thought as the Magister let the tea-kettle fall upon them. Axel thought about the deluge, Claes upon the last judgment. Amid these relations they went to sleep.

At half-past eleven I heard the noise of bells, horses, and carriages before the house of the Colonel. At twelve o'clock all was still and silent, as well within as without the house.

"They will soon all be sweetly asleep," thought I, and began by degrees to be indescribably sleepy.

Nothing is more painful than to be alone, to be sleepy and be compelled to keep awake, especially when those for whom one keeps awake snore with all their might; and had I not given my *parole d'honneur* not to close my eyes, I should probably have speedily done so. I knit at my stocking; but was obliged to put it down, because every minute I was nearly pricking my eyes. I read, and did not understand a word which I read. I looked out of the window, gazed upon the moon and thought—on nothing. The wick of my candle grew as big as a lily. I wished to snuff it—I unfortunately snuffed it out.

My part as watcher became by this means more difficult than ever. I endeavoured now to keep myself awake by terror, and wished in the uncertain glimmering of the white stove, to see the ghost of the White Lady. I thought if a cold hand should suddenly seize mine, and a voice should whisper horrible words in my ear, or a bloody form should ascend up from the floor—when suddenly the crowing voice of a cock was heard in a neighbouring yard, which, in connexion with the dawning day, chased away all imaginary spectres.

The melancholy song of two little chimney-sweepers, who, from the tops of their smoky pleasure-houses saluted the morning, formed the overture to the general awaking life.

In the region of the kitchen soon blazed a friendly fire; coffee diffused its Arabian perfume through the atmosphere of the house; people moved about in the streets, and through the clear winter-air sounded the musical bells of the churches which invited to morning prayers. The smoke-clouds curled purple-tinted up to the bright blue heaven, and with joy I saw at length the beams of the sun, which first greeted the vane and stars of the church towers, and afterwards spread their mantles of light over the roofs of the dwellings of man.

The world around me opened bright eyes; I thought about closing mine; and as glad voices greeted me with "Good morning," I replied, half asleep, "Good night."

DINNER. RAGOUT OF MANY THINGS.

THE wedding-day—has also a morrow!—a wearisome day in the bridal house! Of all the festivity of the preceding day one has only that which remains of an extinguished light—the *fume*. And when from the familiar circle of home, together with all festal sounds and habiliments, has vanished also a friendly countenance (one of the star-lights of its heaven), then it is not extraordinary that its horizon is cloudy;—yes, my little Julie, I thought it quite natural that you got up and went about all day like a rain-cloud, whilst your brother was not unlike a tempest, as he wandered from one room to another humming the “songs of the stars,” which was horrible to hear.

Everybody had agreed that the new-married pair would pass this day with Algernon’s old grandmother, who lived quite retired from the world, with her maid, her cat, her weak eyes, and her human love, which occasioned her to wish that nobody should ever marry—which pious wish she had even expressed to her grandson and Emilia, but in vain. She had, in the mean time, spite of her vexation, wished to see the young couple at her house, and had herself, as report said, peeled the apples for the apple-cake which was to crown the conclusion of the frugal dinner. The day afterwards we were to see them with us, and the next we were to pass with them.

In the mean time we spent the day after the bridal in a sort of stupid quietness. Her Honour ate the whole day nothing but thin water-gruel.

After we had brought this heavy day to an end, and every one had betaken himself to his chamber, Julie felt a lively need to animate herself a little; she sent for walnuts, came into my room and sate down to crack them, and to praise her bridegroom.

“How incomparably charming he is! So regular, so sensible, so even in temper, so pleasant, so—so order—(a delicate nut!)—so attentive, so prudent, so regular in his affairs—not niggardly either—so good—not too good either—so—so altogether just what he should be!”

I nodded my approval of all this, wishing Julie much happiness, and—yawned quite indescribably. There are perfections which put one to sleep.

The next day we had a little fresher wind. The newly-married pair came to dinner. A cap suits Emilia excellently ; she was gentle, pleasant, amiable, but not exactly gay ; whilst, on the contrary, Algernon was unusually cheerful, animated, and talkative. This annoyed and vexed Julie ; she looked at them alternately, and knew not exactly where she was. The domestics put themselves to infinite pains to call Emilia “her Honour.” This new appellation did not seem to give her any pleasure ; and when an old faithful servant said to her for the seventh time, “Sweet Miss—ah, Lord Jesus!—her Honour,” Emilia said, somewhat impatiently and weariedly—“Dear me, let it be : it is not really so important.” The servants presented no dish to her at table without making it very formidable with their question—“Does your Honour please ?” “Yes, yes, the man knows what he is about,” remarked the Colonel. Emilia looked as if she did not find his knowledge at all agreeable.

Julie, full of anxiety, took her sister after dinner into another room, threw herself on her knees before her, and, clasping her arms around her, exclaimed with tears, “Emilia, how is it ? Sweet Emilia ! Oh, heavens !—thou art not happy—thou lookest—dejected ! Art thou not satisfied ? Art thou not happy !”

Emilia embraced her sister warmly, and said, consolingly, but with tears in her gentle eyes :

“I ought to be, indeed, sweet Julie ; Algernon is so good, so noble—I must be happy with him.”

But Julie, like all persons of lively tempers, was not satisfied with this. “I ought to be !” She wished for “I am,” and considered it quite desperate, unheard of, and unnatural, that a young wife should not be indescribably happy. *She had read novels.* She behaved through the remainder of the day stiffly towards Algernon, who did not seem to trouble himself particularly about it.

When Emilia, with tearful eyes, had again parted from her home, Julie gave full scope to her displeasure, and highly enraged herself against Algernon, who could be so well pleased and merry whilst Emilia was so dejected ; he

was an icicle, a savage, a heathen, a —— . N.B. The Colonel and her Honour were not present during this philippic; the Cornet, again, took another view of the affair—was displeased with Emilia, who, he thought, required too much from her husband. “Had not he, poor fellow, to spring up and look for her work-basket? Did he not put on her fur shoes, her shawl, her cloak? And did she once thank him?” Julie took her sister’s part; the Cornet, Algernon’s; the spirit of controversy already threw various bitter seeds into the dispute; and the good brother and sister might, perhaps, have remained at variance had not they, as they both stooped to pick up Helena’s needle, knocked their heads together, the shock of which ended the contention by a burst of laughter; and the question of the rights of man and woman—that sea, upon whose billows the two disputants found themselves unexpectedly betrayed—was quickly given up.

The next day was consolatory for Julie. Emilia was gayer and happier to receive her parents and her brother and sisters in her own home, busied herself with the most unconstrained grace, with the warmest cordiality, to entertain them well. All the Colonel’s favourite dishes were on the table, and Emilia’s eyes gleamed with joy as her father desired to be helped a second time to turtle soup, adding that it was “outrageously good!” Her Honour was not a little pleased with the excellence and good order of the dinner, as well as with all the arrangements overhead. She glanced, to be sure, a little uneasily at a pudding, one side of which seemed to be somewhat *ruinous*; but Julie turned round the dish unobservedly, and her Honour, being near-sighted, believed that the fault lay in her own eyes, and was satisfied.

Emilia had the deportment of a *housewife*, and it became her infinitely well. The Cornet was charmed with his sister, and with everything that surrounded her in her new home; everything spoke Swedish, thought he; sofas, and chairs, and tables, and curtains, and porcelain, and so on. There was nothing foreign; and it was precisely this, according to his opinion, which made one feel so comfortable and so much at home.

Julie was much pleased with Algernon, who, if he did not exactly make much of his young wife, yet either was beside

her, or continually followed her with his loving eyes; one saw plainly how his soul surrounded her, and Emilia cast towards him many bright and friendly glances in return for his.

How good the coffee tastes when there is snow falling without, and there is the air of summer within. That we ladies all found, as we, in the afternoon, assembled around a blazing fire, enjoying the Arabian beverage, had a long and cheerful conversation, during which Emilia talked of the domestic institutions and arrangements which she thought of making, that she might bring comfort and good order into her home; and of which she had in part talked, and should further talk of, with her—her husband. (This little word caused Emilia some little difficulty in the utterance.) And see! it was all quite prudent, quite good, quite to the purpose. We proved all, accurately and maturely, between the coffee-cups and the blazing of the fire; we added to, and deducted; and could not, however, find out anything much better than that which Emilia had herself devised.

A family is, at the same time, like a poem and a machine. Its poetry or song of the feelings, which streams through, and unites, one with another, all its members; which twines flower-wreaths around the thorny crowns of life, and brightens with the green of hope “the naked rocks of reality,” there-with every human heart is acquainted. But the machinery (without whose well-directed movements *l'opera della vita*, however, remains a fragment without support) many regard as not essential, and neglect it. And yet this part of the institution of domestic life is not the least important to its harmonious progress. It is with this machinery as with the clock. Are all wheels, springs, and so on, well arranged? It needs merely that the pendulum swing, and all is set in proper motion, which goes on as if of itself, with order, and the golden finger of peace and prosperity points out the hours upon the clear face.

Emilia felt this, and she was determined, from the beginning, so to arrange her home and her household, that they, spite of the little accidental blows and knocks of fate, should stand to the end, till the weight had run down.

One great and important thing towards the accomplish-

ment of this end is the prudent and exact management of money matters in housekeeping. In Emilia's case, this was put upon a good and rational footing. From the great common purse there branched out and arranged themselves various little purses, which, like brooks flowing from one and the same fountain considerably towards various quarters, made the household plantations fruitful.

Emilia was to receive annually, for her own particular expenditure, a certain sum, which she should devote to her own dress and other little purposes, which were not to come into the household register. And as her dress was always to continue simple and tasteful as it had hitherto been, she would be able to spend a great part of this money to gladden her own heart. Guess, or *say* in what manner, dear reader—you know how.

A woman ought to have her own purse, great or small, whichever it may be. Ten, fifty, a hundred, or a thousand dollars, according to circumstances, but her own, for which she accounts only to—herself. Would you know “why,” you gentlemen who make your wives render an account of pins and farthings? Why, most especially and particularly for your own sublime peace and prosperity. You do not think so? Well, then. A maid-servant knocks down a tea-cup, a servant breaks a glass, or suddenly tea-pot, cup, and glass, all at once fall in pieces, and *nobody* has broken them; and so on. The wife who has not her own purse, but who must replace the cups and glass, goes to her husband, relates the misfortune, and begs for a little to make good the damage. He scolds the servants, his wife, who ought to look after the servants. “Money, indeed!—a little money—money does not grow out of the ground, nor yet is it rained down from heaven—many small brooks make a great river.” And such like. At last he gives a little money, and remains often in a very ill humour.

Again, if the wife have her own little purse, then such little vexations never come near him. Children, servants, misfortune, remain the same; but no disorder is remarked; all is made right as at first; all is in order; and the head of the house, who, perhaps, with the greatest ease, could lay down a thousand rixdollars at once, need not for a few pence,

squeezed out at different times, lose the equipoise of his temper, which is as invaluable to the whole house as to himself.

And dost thou reckon as nothing, thou unfeeling nabob, those little surprises, those little birthday and name-day pleasures, with which thy wife can give herself the delight of surprising thee—those thousand small pleasures which, unexpected as falling stars, gleam, like them, on the heaven of home, and which must all come to thee from the affection of thy wife, through—*a little money*, which thou must give to her in the gross, in order to receive again in the small, with rich interest of comfort and happiness.

Now, is it clear yet? Algernon had long seen this, and that operated greatly on Emilia's future happiness.

To every true woman's heart it is indescribably delightful *to give*—to feel itself alive in the satisfaction and happiness of others;—it is the sunshine of the heart, and is more needed here in the cold North perhaps than elsewhere. Besides this, a little freedom is so refreshing.

But where was I just now? Ah! taking coffee with Emilia. Thence go we upon the wings of time to undertake a longer journey.

He who undertakes to relate histories with the pen, must take good care how he husbands the reader's patience. Sometimes he can very well give an account of to-day, of to-morrow, and the next day; but on other occasions he must lump together time and circumstance, if he do not wish that the reader shall lump together his book, and jump from the fifth to the eighth chapter. Highly important is it that it should not be so with my honourable family; so I hasten to take a little leap over probably three months, and only shortly to put together how my H—— friends passed them.

Julie and her bridegroom passed them in walking. Every day, when the weather permitted it, they went with the whole length of Queen-street, exchanged greetings and talked with acquaintance, noticed figures and dresses with the pleasant consciousness how handsome and distinguished their own were. Sometimes they went to a shop and bought trifles, or ate at Berndt's a tart, which was often "dreadfully delicious." In the evenings there was a supper somewhere, or an exhibition somewhere, or a ball somewhere—and this

always furnished a subject for the next day; so that, thank heaven! the betrothed had no lack of conversation. Besides this, Lieutenant Arvid, who had everywhere entrance into the *great* world, had always something *small* to relate—some anecdote of the day, some word of this and this about that and that; and so it was all very amusing—thought Julie.

The Cornet had taken an odd fancy. He had set himself to study. Studied the science of war, of mathematics, history, etc., and discovered more and more that as his bodily eyes were formed to look in all directions over the earth and up to heaven, so also was his spiritual eye designed to look into the kingdoms of nature and science, and to acknowledge the light of heaven in these. It was peculiar, that the more he learned to see, the darker he became. He had dread of and for spectres! Yes, gentlemen, it is actually true, and the spectre which he feared has been from time immemorial known in the world under the name of *Ignorance*, an extraordinarily fat lady, dressed in a shining white stuff; *Self-sufficiency*, her long-necked daughter, who always went and trod in the footsteps of her sweet mamma; and *Boasting*, who might be the ghost of an old French language-master, who during his lifetime was related to this lady, and often was seen in company with her.

For the rest, he sought gladly the company of older and more learned men; was much at home with his father and with Helena, and often let his young gentlemen acquaintances knock and shake his bolted door in vain. Sometimes, nevertheless, he would be in doubt whether he should not open it, because he thought—"Perhaps my good friends come to repay me my money;" but then he considered to himself and thought again, "then they would not shake the door so stoutly," and he remained quiet. The Cornet had two young friends for whom, at a given sign, his door always flew open. These young men formed a noble triumvirate. Their watchword, in time of war as in peace, was, "Forwards! March!"

Emilia and Algernon made a journey in the beginning of April to Blekinge, where, on a large estate, an old aunt and godmother of Emilia's lived. Emilia received immediately after her marriage a letter from her, in which she begged

Emilia and her husband to visit her as soon as possible. She had lately lost her only child, a son, and wished now, at the age of sixty, to gladden, or rather to reanimate, her heart, by giving it something else to love, to live for. She desired the new-married pair to spend the spring and summer with her; she spoke of neighbours, and of various good and pleasant things which could make their summer residence agreeable. She mentioned that she should make her will; that her property would be theirs after her death, if they would regard her as a mother.

"Upon my word a beautiful letter!" said Uncle P——. "Set off straight there at once, nephew, with your wife—have the horses put to the carriage immediately. I wish I were in your clothes, you lucky fellow! Wait till the beginning of April?—Madness! What, and if the old lady should die in the mean time? Sir, that is what one may call sleeping over one's luck! I would take care that it did not happen to me!—Dear Julie, wake me when the coffee comes in."

When the travelling-carriage stood before the door, and the weeping Emilia sate beside Algernon exchanging tearful heartfelt glances and anxious adieus with her parents and family, who stood around the carriage, Algernon seized her hand, and inquired, "Wouldst thou now rather remain here with these, or go with me?"

"Go with thee," replied Emilia, gently.

"With thy whole heart?"

"With my whole heart!"

"Drive off!" exclaimed Algernon, gaily.

"Emilia, we accompany each other on the journey—through life!"

The carriage rolled away. Oh that the carriage of every marriage swung upon such springs!

Quietly and sadly did the blind girl pass her dark days; her health visibly declined. Her soul resembled the fires in a charcoal-heap; its flames appear not, do not burst forth, but consume their dwelling silently and surely. In song alone did she at times utter forth her feelings, and when she believed herself to be alone she composed both words and music—which bore the stamp of an unhappy and unquiet

heart. In company she spoke scarcely a word, and only her incessant occupation of twisting around her hands and fingers a ribbon or a cord, betrayed the restless disquiet of her heart.

There is in woman a state of mind which operates by causing to do well whatever she does in her domestic circle; which causes a quiet peace to attend her, like that of a pleasant spring day; that where she lingers, lingers also a prosperity and a well-being which she imparts to every one who approaches her; this state of mind proceeds from a pure, god-fearing and devoted heart. Happy, happy above all others (however in other respects richly gifted) who is possessed of this! And happy was Helena, for it was she who was thus richly gifted. In a letter which she wrote at this time to a friend, she painted vividly herself her happy condition.

“Thou askest what I do?” wrote she at the conclusion of the letter: “I enjoy life in every moment of it. My parents, my family, my work, my books, my flowers, the sun, the stars, heaven and earth: all give me joy, all make me feel the indescribable joy of happiness and of existence. Thou askest me what I do when dark thoughts and doubts seize upon my soul. I have them not—for I trust in God; I love him, I hope in him. I have no cares or anxious fears, for I know that he will make all right—that sometime all will be good and bright. Thus thinking, thus feeling, I must indeed be happy——”

“*Curro, curri, currum, currere*,” repeated the little Dumplings. “*Cururri, cursum, currere*, you little sinners!” corrected the Magister; and thereon they honestly spent (I never exaggerate!) nearly three months.

“It goes on slowly—but it goes on safely,” said the Magister consolingly, and full of consolation, to her Honour.

Her Honour—God bless her excellent Honour!—but could it only have been managed that for her our flight into the country had been without so much trouble, so many an “ah! ho!” and so many packages and so many trunks! The Colonel said, half in joke, a little word on this subject.

“That is easily said,” replied her Honour, gravely.

The Cornet, who could not bear the least remark about his

mother, in whose proceeding and action he would never see the least fault, held by her in all her trouble, and contradicted us, who thought it a little unnecessary; and when she was altogether too much put out of sorts, he went about singing "God save the King" (the only English which he knew), in order to withdraw our attention from her Honour.

A month before and a month after the removal, she wearied herself and worked for our good, and on the day of the journey itself—oh heavens!

What packing and pitching,
In cellar and kitchen!
In parlour and hall
All the things have a ball,
And wherever we tread
Things turn heels over head.
And gentlefolks ringing,
And servants off springing.

Guests come, and breakfasts and trunks in array,
All throng about us and all must have way.
Of friendship they talk, goose and beefsteak attack,
And up go the mouths all—and up goes the pack;
The lady smiles, groans, and then sighs forth "Good lack!"

Quick the travelling time comes,
The alarum drum booms.

Thus hurrying, thus hurrying—run hither and hither!
"Drive onward! drive onward! the mantles bring hither!"
Such packing and stowing
Reminds me of going;

and going to——

THORSBORG:

THE paternal estate of the Colonel, where we arrived in the middle of May.

Had I a drop of the vein which sprung forth from Sir Walter Scott's inkstand, spread itself through "all lands," and has wetted with historical-antiquarian ink the pens of hundreds of authors, then would I give in this place a magnificent description of the stately castle of Thorsborg, built during the Thirty Years' War by a high-minded and nobly descended lady in nine months' time, with walls as firm as the minds of those times, and with leaded window panes, as small as the rays of light which emanated in those days from the cloisters. I would tell how Mrs. Barbro Åkesdotter,

of Göholm and Hedesö, wife of the Admiral Stjernbjelke (whose portrait is to be seen at Thorsborg, and shows her to have been a proud and dignified woman), in order to surprise her husband, then fighting for the cause of freedom in Germany, she raised this noble building upon the height where it now stands in princely grandeur, commanding immeasurable fields and meadows, to an extent of many miles; and how she, on the arrival of her hero at the home of his fathers, had burning lights placed in all the windows of the castle, in order to delight and charm his eyes. I would also whisper that this was not successful, and that tradition says that he was exceeding angry at Mrs. Barbro's handiworks. I would further relate somewhat of the fate of the successors who afterwards lived upon the estate, of whom one, who was gifted with the power of a skald, scratched upon a pane of glass in the castle saloon, and which, in the time of Colonel H——, was still to be seen, the following distich, as a memorial of themselves, and for our edification:

“ Miss Sigrid with her Soop,
Are both great fools.”

And if I had descended down the stream of time, from the burnt-out volcanoes of the Middle Ages to the calm places of rest of our days, I would, wandering among these, searching among the remains of the lava-streams, and after the extinguished fires collected in the urns of memory, scatter them through these pages, and—that is to say (to talk a little less flowery), I would speak about all the old armour, helmets and spears, which still are preserved at Thorsborg, and which Cornet Carl embraced with particular tenderness; of the bloody dresses, swords, murder-balls, and such like; and mention among the peaceful remembrances, the doors, overlaid with a thousand wooden figures, of the sleeping-room of Gustavus Adolphus the Second, which were removed here from the more ancient castle; of the immeasurable saloon with its floor of oak laid chequer-wise, and the oak spars of its roof; of the portrait of Mrs. Barbro, as she sits with her trowel in her hand; of her spinning-wheel, etc.; and, in order not to forget salt to the soup, would I not forget to relate of the spectral apparitions which occur in the castle, and which nobody was so liable to perceive as the Magister. He

often heard terrible sounds—a mixture of the clangour of the trumpet and the howl of the wolf; he heard how at night-time there was a soft moving about in the billiard-hall; how the balls rattled; small bells were rung, and so on. I would relate how the people in the house knew about one ghost, which walked without a head in the great oak saloon in moonlight evenings; and how very often, amid dark nights, lights suddenly gleamed from all the windows; and how there was nobody who had not heard sofas, tables, and chairs dragged with a terrible noise up and down the room where nobody was; and that even her Honour—Hu! but I begin to be horrified myself; and I now see clearly how I have only ability with common ink to write about common and everyday things; and therefore find it more safe and agreeable to tell how the little Dumplings, happy beyond all description to be in the country, leapt about, and dug among the ditches and heaps of stones, where were the ruins of the old house, sought for treasures and found—primroses. How Julie herself, like a butterfly, sprang after her winged sister beings, defying her bridegroom to run in pursuit of her, until she observed that it was not worth her trouble, for he did not exert himself at all—“It was too warm.”

He liked, above all things, to sit upon a soft sofa with his little bride, comfortably resting upon the softly swelling cushions, in a sort of inward observation of life's—easy side. In the mean time he busied himself with hunting alternately on the Colonel's estate and that of his own father. His father was a cheerful, good-hearted, grey-headed man, who esteemed highly five things on earth; namely, his old noble name, his son, the friendship of Colonel H——, his set of white horses called “swans,” and his tobacco-pipe, for the lighting of which an incessant fire burnt, both winter and summer, in his stove. He was enchanted with his little daughter-in-law elect, who, however, played him many a little trick, over which he was just as easily made angry as he was easily put into good humour again. He related histories willingly, exaggerated prodigiously, swore boldly, and was, after all, that which people called *a man of honour*.

At Thorsborg the family soon fell into a quiet and cheerful way of life. Her Honour went about, to be sure, with her bunch of keys and her troubles, but allowed nobody to dis-

turb themselves on that account; and so intrinsically good was she, that she never annoyed or made any one uneasy but herself.

The evenings were especially agreeable. When we were all assembled in a little green boudoir, rich with pictures and flowers, and where the reading of the works of Franzén, Tegnér, Stagnelius, Sjöberg, Nicander, and many other Swedish poets, which Professor L——'s expressive eloquence and excellent declamation taught us more to value, and made us every day richer in noble and fresh thoughts and feelings. Frequently, also, there was reading of a more serious kind; that, namely, whose object it is to diffuse clearness upon subjects of the highest importance to the human heart—on God and immortality. This, I soon observed, was done with an especial reference to the blind girl, upon whose marble-pale countenance the looks of the Colonel always lingered during the reading of those passages where the rays of divinity penetrated most clearly and most warmly, although through the veil of human weakness. Often, too, were the evenings spent in conversations on the same subjects. Professor L——, the Colonel, and Helena, took the principal part in these. The measures taken by the Colonel, in common with the Professor, for the moral improvement of his dependents, by good schools and other establishments, which were intended as much for their benefit as their enjoyment, gave an unconstrained occasion for these conversations. The human being—his organisation—his education—his dignity—his weakness—the ennobling of humanity through the rightly preaching of a rightly understood gospel—this life in connexion with the future;—these were subjects which were handled by Professor L—— with the greatest warmth, beauty, clearness, and power. His fervid and powerful eloquence, which expressed so excellently his rich feelings—the happy ability which he possessed of giving clearness even to the most abstract ideas, by examples drawn from the rich stores of history, morals, and nature—the calm, beautiful wisdom, which was the result of his learning, and the beneficial strength of which irresistibly passed to the hearts of all his auditors—the fine tones of his manly voice, the dignity and expressiveness of his features—all caused him to be listened to with delight for whole hours. And

when, as he went deeper into his subject, he expressed himself with an ever-increasing warmth, with a more forcible utterance, expressed more lofty and profound ideas, people felt themselves, as it were, lifted from the earth and brought nearer to heaven. It was an apotheosis of thought and feeling, and the heavenward journey of the moment left always behind it in our hearts a living spark of the eternal fire.

It was during these evenings that I saw feelings of a higher and nobler kind arise in the hitherto somewhat childish and volatile Julie. I saw her breast heave, her cheeks crimson, whilst she listened to the conversations on truth and virtue; and her expressive eyes dwelt on the lips of the noble interpreter, as if to draw in every word; and she answered her bridegroom shortly and with indifference, as he sometimes would solicit her judgment on pretty little paper things and cuttings-out, in which accomplishment he possessed a real talent.

The blind girl remained silent during these conversations, and but rarely did any movement in her statue-like countenance betray the feelings which stirred within her.

We had also in the evenings conversations of another kind—of a light, but, nevertheless, of an important nature. In these, Cornet Carl and her Honour took part. One evening, as Professor L—— and the Colonel were absent, Lieutenant Arvid gave a long lecture on the best mode of cooking reindeer flesh, and on the sauce thereto. Julie inquired whether Arvid's speech did not give us a great appetite to eat an early supper, and go quickly to bed. Universal applause.

One day, as Julie and I sate at an open window and worked—a pot of Provence roses standing upon the table between us—and we had long sate silent, Julie said all at once, quite hastily, “Do you not think?”—and was again silent.

I looked up at her, and asked, “What then?”

“Yes—that—that Professor L—— has something very noble in his countenance, and particularly in his brow?”

“Yes,” I replied, “one reads there his noble soul, his mild wisdom.”

Julie smelt at the Provence rose—its buds seemed to have blossomed upon her cheeks.

“Aha!” thought I.

Again Julie asked, "Do you not think?"—— New pause.

"That Prof——," said I, leading the way.

"Yes—that—that Professor L—— has a fine voice, and that he talks most excellently? He makes everything so clear, so rich, so beautiful. One feels oneself better whilst one hears him."

"That is true. But do you not think that Lieutenant Arvid has a very handsome moustache, very handsome teeth, and a particularly pleasant voice, especially when he says 'the deuce ta——,'"

"Now you are malicious, Beata," said Julie, hastily, reddening, as she sprang up and ran away. In passing him, she woke Lieutenant Arvid, who was taking his after-dinner nap upon a sofa in the next room; he grumbled a little, and demanded, whilst he leisurely stretched out his arms and legs—a kiss in compensation.

He received—"Yes, indeed; pish!"

In the mean time, Julie became more serious every day; her temper, hitherto so constantly cheerful and good, began to be irregular, and sometimes petulant; her demeanour became more silent and grave, and sometimes a faint expression of melancholy dwelt upon her charming countenance. For a long time, however, none of her family remarked this change; every member of which had many affairs of his own to look after.

Her Honour, whose lively nature and active goodness always kept her in motion, had in the country every hour occupied. She was the comforter, the counsellor, and teacher, in great as well as in small; and besides this, she was the physician of the whole neighbourhood. She was all this, with an ease and a possession of mind which one could hardly have expected from her, in seeing her troubled manner on occasions of the least perplexity in her own home and household. She herself went about to people with medicines and encouragement, soup and good counsel; and the first gave substance and force to the latter. She was the darling of the old district; old and young, rich and poor, praised her as "so very good and condescending!"

The Colonel occupied himself apparently in a more passive manner; but, in fact, was more actively busied about the

welfare of those over whom he had sway. He was to his dependents, as well as to his domestic servants, a good and just, but strict ruler. He was generally more feared than loved; but every one acknowledged that, during the time the property had been in his hands, depravity of manners, drunkenness and crime of all kinds, had decreased every year; and, on the contrary, order, honesty, morality, social intercourse, and their consequences, prosperity and contentedness, advanced more and more, even to neighbouring places; and the excellent institutions which he formed, the good schools which he established, and which every year made more perfect, gave hope of the increasing cultivation and happiness of the rising generation. Professor L—— stood now at his side as a powerful coadjutor.

This is the place to say a word of explanation regarding Professor L——. It shall be short and good.

Professor L—— was the son of a man of property, and was himself in very good circumstances. He had become a clergyman, in order to be, according to his opinion, more useful to his fellow creatures. He was, in the most beautiful signification, the father of his parish.

Remarkable is it that he, next to me, and perhaps more than me, paid attention to Julie. His eye followed her often, so kindly serious, so searching——

Helena had the oversight of the parish girls' school, which important office she filled excellently, and with as much pleasure as care.

The Cornet had—oversight of the boys' school?—Does anybody perchance believe it? No, heaven forfend! and that was well, both for him and the school. He had suddenly taken a violent passion for botany; went out early in a morning, remained often abroad the whole day, and came home in the evening quite wearied, with pockets full of weed——plants, I will say. He talked a deal about the interest of botany, of its benefit and usefulness; showed Julie incessantly the difference between a pentandria and an octandria, &c. In particular was he bent upon finding the *Linnea Borealis*, which he had been told grew in the neighbourhood, but could not discover. This he now went out to seek both early and late.

"There is something very queer about Carl," said Julie,

“when he comes home from his botanical rambles ; either he is so joyous that he is ready to embrace everybody, or he looks so cross as if he were ready to bite.”

“He is too much taken up with his botany,” said the Colonel.

Helena smiled and shook her head—and so did I—and so wouldst thou also, my young reader. I guess that thou guessest that he—but hush, hush as long—do not let us betray the secret which will come in proper time to light. In the mean time, we drive in the great family carriage to make——

VISITS.

THE Colonel, her Honour, Julie, the Cornet, and I. Her Honour, who sometimes had ideas which seemed to have fallen from the moon, had lately come upon the notion that I began to be melancholy ; which proceeded, she fancied, from my having beaten my brains over the Book of the Revelations, because she had found me a few times with the Bible in my hands open at the last page, where the coming of the New Jerusalem is described. Now her Honour was afraid of nothing so much as of beating one's brains over books ; she half believed that my reason was in danger, and in order to divert me, and to draw me a little from “such things,” she was altogether determined that I should accompany her on the visits which were to be made in the neighbourhood.

We set off one beautiful afternoon, and all of us in good humour.

We drank coffee with Mrs. Mellander, who, together with her husband (the appendage of his wife), rented a little place from the Colonel. Mrs. Mellander was uncommonly ugly ; marked by the small-pox, and had a bearded chin ; carried her nose very high over her silent, worthy husband, who deeply acknowledged her power, and talked about good breeding and morality the whole day long to her two handsome but somewhat awkward daughters, whom the Cornet likened to weeping birches. For the rest she was neat, orderly, and domestic ; kept in good order her husband, her daughters, a maid-servant, and three cats, and believed herself therefore to have an excellent head for government.

"Yes, yes!" said she once, sighing, "now people say Count Platen is dead; next year they will perhaps say Mrs. Mellander is dead."

"That would indeed be dreadful," said the Colonel, who was present.

Whilst Mr. Counsellor Mellander led the Colonel down into the little orchard to show him a newly laid out, or, as he called it, a newly broken up piece of land in an old potato field, we began to hear every kind of news from Mrs. Mellander. First, that she had read a very entertaining book about a young fellow who was called Fritz.

"Is it a romance?" asked her Honour.

"Yes, it is a romance. It is very amusing. She whom Fritz loved is called Ingeborg."

"Who wrote the book?" again asked her Honour.

"Nay, that I do not know. He must be a clergyman. And it is all written there so beautifully how they voyage over the seas, and how she claps her small white hands."

"Can it be Frithiof?" exclaimed the Cornet, perfectly screaming with pure astonishment.

"Frithiof—yes, Fritz, or Frithiof, so was he called."

"By Tegnér!" exclaimed her Honour, quietly.

"Ten—yes, yes, some such a name I have heard."

Julie lifted her eyes up to heaven.

Her Honour, who at the first moment looked as if it were desirable to turn the conversation from such a subject, now asked Mrs. Mellander whether she had heard that the Countess B—— had removed from her estate.

"No!" replied Mrs. Mellander sharply, and with decision, "I know nothing about her. There is no longer any intercourse between us. Would you think it, your Honour, that she and I were brought up together? Yes—we were in our childhood together every day; and I had a straw hat with red ribbon, and I said to her, 'Listen, Jeannette,' and she said to me, 'Listen, Lisette,' and we were the best friends in the world. Then she went on her way, and I went on mine—to my uncle, Counsellor Stridsberg, at Norrtelge. Your Honour knows him certainly?"

"No!" replied her Honour.

"Bless me! not know the rich Stridsberg—he married Mamsell Bredström, daughter of shopkeeper Bredström in

Stockholm, your Honour knows really—brother-in-law to Lönquist—who lives in the Packar-market.”

“I do not know,” replied her Honour, smiling and half embarrassed.

“Indeed—indeed!” said Mrs. Mellander, somewhat displeased, and perhaps with lessened esteem for her Honour’s acquaintance. “Yes,” said she, continuing her relation, “and thus it happened that we did not see one another for several years. But then, when I was married to Mellander, I went to a concert in Stockholm, and there saw my old youthful friend, who had now become the Countess B——. And I bowed and bowed to her—but what do you think? She look point-blank at me and never moved again, and behaved exactly as if she did not recognise me. ‘Aha!’ thought I. ‘Now, however, when she drives past my house in her country carriage, she puts her head out of the window and bows and nods. But—I knit. What does your dear Honour think?’”

That which her dear Honour thought, however, Mrs. Mellander did not know this time; for in the same moment came in her dear better-half, together with the Colonel, who mentioned our setting off, as the clock had already struck five, and we had almost seven miles to drive to Löfstaholm, where we had to make our next visit, to the Ironfounder D——. In the mean time every one of the company must take two cups of coffee, with the exception of the Cornet, who, cursing Mrs. Mellander, her good intention and her coffee, resolutely declined. He and Julie had during this time done their best to enliven and amuse the two Mamselles Eva and Amalia. The Cornet said to them, in his gay good humour, all kind of little polite things. Julie praised their flowers, promised to lend them books, patterns, etc., which had the effect of making the handsome weeping birches lift up by degrees their branches, and move their leaves, as if shaken by a brisk wind, or enlivened by a beneficial rain; that is to say, Amalia and Eva were quite lively, and their eyeballs turned both to east and west.

The Colonel and his family were received at Löfstaholm with the liveliest and most noisy joy. In an especial manner was great attention shown to Cornet Carl, whose generous deportment, his lively temper, together with his

merry fancies, had made him universally beloved and held in high esteem by the neighbours, especially at Löfstaholm, where balls, theatricals, and pleasures of all kinds, were perpetually alternating, and where he had danced one night with twelve ladies in four-and-twenty dances—by turns as Captain Puff, or Cousin Pastoreau, or as the Burgomaster in Carolus Magnus—and occasioned universal delight. The parts of lovers he had never been able to take, because he had *never been in love*; and, therefore, could not naturally represent that which was contrary to his nature.

In order to celebrate the name-day of the Ironmaster D——, his three clever daughters, and his four clever sons, gave on this evening a little concert, to which a tolerably large company of listeners had been invited, and to which now the H—— family added a welcome five.

Mrs. D——, whom report called a very accomplished lady, who talked of Weber and Rossini, of education and accomplishment, poetry, colouring, taste, tact, and so on, made a flowery speech to her Honour about her views of education, and of a system which had laid the foundation of that which she had given to her children, and without which, both Weber and Rossini, accomplishment, taste, and tact, would move without time.

At the beginning of the concert, Eleonora D—— bashfully and blushing seated herself at the pianoforte and played "*Con tutta la forza della disperazione*." In every chord which she struck she gave two or three notes into the bargain; and the shakes, thanks to the bass-pedal and fermeté, went over the keys like a dash of India-rubber over a drawing. The close produced much effect—the whole piano thundered. After this, the blue-eyed Therese sang an aria out of the Barber of Seville. Magnificent staccato tones, and powerful rolls, as if shook with manual force, and shrill exclamations, drew from the audience the most lively declarations of gratitude for so much—trouble.

The Ironmaster D——, a little fat and merry old man, was fascinated by his children, whom, in his paternal heart, he compared to the Seven Wonders of the World, and went up during all this to Colonel H——, rubbing his hands, and asking, with flashing eyes, "Now, what thinks my brother? What says my brother? What? What? What?"

The Colonel, who had in part too good natural taste, and in part had heard too much good music, not quite well to know what he was about, took refuge in his good-humoured arch smile, and the two-sided praise, "They play devilishly!" or, "She sings like the deuce!"—which dubious expressions the happy father received with the most lively pleasure.

A duet which succeeded this, between Adolf D—— and one of his sisters, got a little (as the Colonel said) out of joint; and a duet of angry looks took place between the brother and sister; whilst the song, by degrees, again adjusted itself.

The finale, or chorus, which all the seven virtuosos sang together, in which "long life" and "free from strife," "bowls" and "skåls," and such like words rhymed, composed, together with the thereto-belonging and preceding row of words, by Adolf D——, would, I thought, have shook down the house.

Her Honour, who during all this sate as if she were at evening service, with a devotional and rather deplorable mien, now did her best to satisfy the musical family's thirst for praise. The Colonel repeated his words of power, and the company sang a chorus of *bravo!* and *charmant!* which, however, were accompanied by many equivocal looks. This behaviour scandalised the Cornet—he had an easy part to act—who could say, and did say it freely, that he did not at all understand anything about music, and could not, therefore, give any judgment upon it. Any one, who from his musical knowledge (or for his sins' sake) is called upon to give an opinion, is badly off at such a concert as this. One may condemn artists, for one has purchased the right of doing so; but amateurs one can only praise; that one considers oneself obliged to do; and if one cannot do it with a good conscience, the truth does not willingly take flight without showing a sour face.

It was not to be thought of that we should return home before supper. The clock struck eleven before we were again in the carriage. It was a mild, unusually lovely spring night. Her Honour was soon asleep, lulled by the rocking of the carriage and by our conversation. We all grew silent by degrees. The Colonel's countenance was gloomy. The Cornet sate and looked at the moon, which, pale and mild,

stood above the green peaceful earth. There was a something enthusiastic in his look, which I had never remarked before. Julie was also full of thought. The coachman and horses must also have thought about something, for we only crept slowly through wood and fields. When we, about midnight, drove past the parsonage, the residence of Professor L., we saw a light shining in one of the windows. The Colonel saw it, and said, whilst his eyes beamed kindly, "There, now, sits L——, and wakes and labours for the good of his fellow-creatures. He himself enjoys no repose; nor will he, perhaps, for fifty years or more; and it may be so long before his works are rightly understood and valued; and these nights of study succeed to days which are wholly dedicated to the fulfilment of his manifold duties."

"He is like his light," said the Cornet, "he consumes himself to illuminate others."

"He must be a noble man," said Julie, with tears in her eyes.

"Yes, indeed," said the Colonel, "I know none nobler. But he cannot live long in that way; he kills himself."

"Has he not," asked Julie, "any sister, or mother, or somebody at home with him, who will look after him, and love him, and value him?"

"No, he is solitary."

"Solitary," repeated Julie, softly and anxiously. Whilst we drove in a half-circle around the parsonage, she leaned out of the carriage-window, and kept her head still turned in the same direction.

"What are you looking after, my child?" asked the Colonel.

"After the light, papa—it glimmers so beautifully in the night."

On the following day several visits were to be made in the neighbourhood; but now it was altogether impossible for the Cornet to accompany us upon these. He had got an intimation that the *Linnæa Borealis* was to be found in a woody district about three or four miles east of Thorsborg; and in order to convince himself thereof, he was obliged to leave us before dinner.

"I cannot comprehend," said Julie, "upon what Carl lives on certain days. He never takes anything with him, how-

ever much I may beg of him to do so, whenever he goes on his pilgrim journeys. It seems to me, also, that he gets very thin."

"Now again he runs to the woods!" said the Colonel, as he saw his son go with great strides across the court. "I fear that his *Linnaea Borealis* has turned his head."

Our visits to-day were less fortunate. At the L——'s of Vik the children had the measles; and, for the sake of our little Dumplings, we posted away, on this news, at full speed.

At M——, the Countess was not at home. In a pleasure-house in the garden sung her canary-birds, hungering in splendid cages; and seemed, by alternately lamenting, alternately joyous quavering notes, both by fair means and foul, to draw attention to their want.

Her Honour gave them seed, water, sugar, bird-grass, and a thousand flattering names.

"With all these," remarked the Colonel, "we shall not get a cup of tea this afternoon."

Between six and seven o'clock in the afternoon, not to have tea was a great loss to the Colonel; and her Honour, who knew that, sate with a troubled and anxious countenance in the carriage, whilst we turned upon our homeward way, which would require a full half hour. In order to take a shorter cut, as he believed, the coachman drove by a new way, which also brought us acquainted with a new district. We drew up in a wild spot, overgrown with wood, to give the horses breath. To the right, and at no great distance from the carriage, we saw above the tree-tops a column of smoke arise, which a gentle wind drove towards us.

"Upon my faith," said the Colonel, "I believe that they have tea ready for us there. See, Julie; does there not shine a white wall through the wood?"

"Yes, I see something grey-white; there is actually a house there; the smoke seems to come from it. It is plain that a fairy is waiting for us there to entertain us. Faërie, which bids to tea, that rhymes excellently."

"My opinion is," said the Colonel, "that if there be no fairy there, yet there are quite certainly people, and who most surely will bestow tea upon us, if we—What do you think, Charlotte; shall we not pay a visit to that little charming palace in the wood yonder? We will tell the

gentlefolks there that we wish to make their acquaintance, and that we—in one word, that we are thirsty.”

Julie laughed heartily. Her Honour looked quite horrified.

“My good friend,” said she, “that would never do.”

“It would do for me, charmingly,” said the Colonel, “to get a cup of tea.”

“Besides, sweet mamma,” said Julie, “we might, perhaps, make a very interesting acquaintance. For example, think if Don Quixote did not die of his blood-letting, as people said, but travelled up into the north, and had set himself down here with his handsome Toboso, and received us; or if we should meet with a hermit, who would tell us his history; or a disguised princess——”

“What and whom you will,” said the Colonel, “if they be only Christian enough to give us a cup of tea.”

The Colonel having now certainly, for the fourth time, suggested his “cup of tea,” her Honour rebutted so gravely this visit à la Don Quixote, as she called it, that all thoughts of it were given up, and it was determined to continue the drive.

As the carriage was now again set in motion, crack went off one of the hind wheels; the carriage went slowly over, and amid a variety of exclamations we tumbled, the one over the other, down upon the road.

Her Honour lay upon me; but endeavoured, however, before she herself thought of getting up, to draw away her reticule, which by chance was under me, and which I assured her was quite impossible for her to do as long as I was unable to move from the spot.

At length we, every one of us, stood again upon our feet. Her Honour was pale, and we gathered all around her, with fear and anxiety, and asked a thousand questions—“Whether she had struck herself—was much frightened—and such like.” But as she replied to all with “No,” and as we, to her anxious inquiries about us could also say that we felt neither fright, wounds, nor bruises (of being squeezed I will not speak), Julie burst out into such a hearty and loud fit of laughter that we were compelled to join her. The coachman and servant were both, like us, uninjured, and scratched their heads with troubled faces.

With their assistance, the Colonel now endeavoured to raise the old heavy carriage; but the road consisted of deep sand—the carriage had nearly fallen into a ditch—the coachman was an invalid—the servant an antiquity. They cried out, “Eu!—uh!” The Colonel alone worked, and the carriage could not be moved from the spot.

A visit to the grey house (the only human habitation which was visible) was now necessary, and the Colonel, who was so bent upon this visit and his “cup of tea,” that he was quite pleased about this affair of the carriage, exclaimed, “We must go altogether in pleasure and need;” offered his wife his arm, and led her, with unusual cheerfulness and merry jokes, along the narrow path, which wound through a thick spruce and pine wood, and seemed to conduct to the so much talked of grey house.

“It will rain,” said her Honour, and looked anxiously up to heaven. “My bonnet!—could we not stop here under the trees, whilst Grönvall runs and fetches people to the carriage?”

“It will not rain,” said the Colonel.

“It does rain,” said her Honour.

“Let us hasten to get under a roof,” said the Colonel, and hurried merrily onward, holding his hat over her Honour’s head.

At last we arrived before the little grey house. It had a gloomy and forlorn appearance; and with the exception of a little kitchen garden, all around was wild and uncultivated. The silver waves of a lake glittered at some distance through the dark fir wood.

It began to rain in earnest as we reached the house. A door on the right of the entrance stood ajar. It led to the sanctuary of the kitchen. As the Colonel entered, a maid-servant started from a corner, like a hare from her form, and fixed upon us her only half-awake grey eyes, and stammered forth—“Be so good as to go up stairs—the gentlefolks are at home.”

We mounted up a narrow and dark staircase, at the head of which the Colonel opened a door, which gave us a view of a little room filled on all sides with washing. Tables and chairs, as well as baskets, were covered with clothes, partly folded and partly not. The air steamed hotly towards us as if from a heated oven.

"Go on, go on!" said the Colonel, kindly admonishing her Honour, who made a halt on the step.

"My sweet friend, I really cannot go and step into the clothes baskets," replied she, a little disturbed. The Colonel and I drew these aside, and we went through the land of clothes to another door, at the opening of which we all stood for a moment in astonishment and surprise.

A perfectly beautiful, majestic lady, dressed magnificently in black silk and lace, stood in the middle of a room, tastefully ornamented with beautiful glass, vases of flowers, mirrors, and other useless things. Somewhat behind her stood, although she seemed to me only to float, a young—yes, actually only a young girl,—but so enchantingly, so angelically beautiful, that one was ready to doubt whether there were anything earthly in her existence. She could not be more than sixteen at the most, had her light hair fastened up with a gold pin, wore a light gauze dress, which surrounded like a bright cloud the lily-white, lovely, ideally beautiful angelic being.

The elder lady approached us, whilst her dark blue eyes regarded somewhat proudly and inquiringly the uninvited guests. Her Honour stepped backward and trod upon my toes. The Colonel, whose noble bearing, frank, and at the same time cheerful manner made upon every one an agreeable impression, soon called forth an amiable smile upon the lips of the handsome Wood-lady, whilst in a manner at once pleasant and comic he related the cause, or rather the causes of our unexpected visit; besought forgiveness for it; mentioned his name, which seemed to make an extraordinary impression upon the beautiful unknown, and presented his wife and daughter—me, he forgot. I forgive him. Who talks of the sauce to the goose? It follows of itself, of course, as appendix. The handsome Wood-lady replied in broken Swedish, but with a voice which was actual music. "Very welcome! the carriage shall have help, and we will have tea—as good as I can. My daughter, my Hermina," added she, whilst she pushed back the shadowy curls from the brow of the sylph.

In the mean time her Honour advancing to the sofa, stood and curtsied with great politeness before a gentleman who hitherto had been half concealed by the window-curtains,

but who now stepped forward, took the hand of the astonished lady, shook it and kissed it, laughing the while, and saying, not without embarrassment, "Sweet mamma!" It was—the Cornet.

Her Honour said merely, "Good heavens!" and seated herself quite hurriedly and quite confounded upon the sofa, with clasped hands and looks riveted upon her son. The Colonel opened his eyes wide, made a most comical grimace—but said nothing. A sort of embarrassed, uneasy constraint took place in the company. The Cornet, who in particular seemed to stand upon needles, went out to look after the reparation of the carriage.

The handsome Wood-lady went out also, and we remained alone with the sylph, whom the Colonel observed with apparent delight. He, as well as her Honour and Julie, endeavoured by questions and observations on a variety of subjects to make her talkative, but did not succeed; she said little, and avoided answering questions. Child-like innocence, inward grace, and an almost heavenly repose, lay in her whole being, and impressed itself upon all which she said. She spoke tolerably good Swedish, but with an accent in which the fine tones of the Italian tongue betrayed itself. Julie was delighted, and ceased not to whisper to me, "She is an angel, an angel! Look at her mouth!—no, look at her little hand!—no, look at her foot!—no, look at her eyes!—ah, brother Carl!—now art thou certainly fast!—she is a real angel!"

A harp and a lyre stood also in that little tastefully ornamented room. To Julie's question whether she played upon either of these instruments, she answered by going up to the harp, and playing and singing a canzonetta of Azioli, with a grace and a voice so touchingly sweet that it drew tears from all our eyes.

She had scarcely ended when her mother entered; immediately afterwards came the Cornet and tea. The occupation which this last gave to one and all made the constraint in the conversation less observable, although it did not go on altogether uninterruptedly.

I could not help remarking (one may pardon this in a Lady House-counsellor) the poverty of the tea-service. The cups were of the coarsest Rörstrand porcelain (three of

them were joined), the sugar was common, and very grey lump; of bread or rusks I saw not a trace.

I fear that our handsome hostess observed that I looked a little about me, and that her Honour also looked a little about her, and glanced with half an eye at me; for her countenance betrayed a painful confusion, whilst she stammered out something about the difficulty of getting white flour. With her willing kindness her Honour offered to send her some from her own store, but received for answer a decided and cold "No, I thank you!" whereupon she was at once discouraged, and rather offended.

The Colonel drank his second cup of tea with satisfaction, when all at once we heard a loud noise, and somebody hastily coming up the stairs. Our hostess crimsoned, turned pale, rose, and went a few steps towards the door, when it was thrown open, and a man with a wild expression of repressed anger, in a pale, stern, and strongly-marked countenance, entered hastily, bowed haughtily and negligently to the company whom he found in the room, and seated himself in a window, where he remained silent; whilst he cast, nevertheless, fierce, angry, and inquiring glances upon our handsome hostess, who, evidently trembling, came silently and reseated herself by her Honour. By degrees, however, her demeanour became calmer, and she answered several times the angry glances which were cast at her with a look full of pride and even disdain.

The Colonel, who measured the newly-arrived with searching looks, addressed to him a question respecting the weather. At the sound of his voice the Unknown turned himself quickly round, regarded the inquirer keenly, and a pale red tinged his sunken cheeks, as he replied, without seeming to know that which he said, "Yes, yes—it no longer rains; any one may go out now."

He looked again through the window, and repeated, "It clears up—one might go without any danger."

The Colonel, who on this day seemed to be possessed by the spirit of contradiction, said, against all appearances, for it cleared up every moment, "It changes now; it clouds over, and certainly begins to rain worse than ever."

Her Honour gave him now a little friendly beseeching glance, and at this silent prayer he rose up, and saw at

length that it had cleared up, and that people might “go their way.”

Amid expressions of gratitude and apologies we made our adieus to the Wood-lady and her daughter, who had large tears in her beautiful eyes when we left the room; silently saluting Mr. Zernebok, as Julie called him, who seemed to wish to shoot us with his eyes, and to help us off.

“You will go with us, Carl?” said the Colonel to his son; “or do you still think of looking for the *Linnæa* bo——?”

“I shall run and see whether the carriage is in order,” returned the Cornet, and was off like a storm-wind.

When we again were seated in the carriage, the Cornet was assailed with questions. He declared that he knew no more of the handsome foreigner than we did: upon one of his rambles into the country he had made her acquaintance—he knew that she was handsome and amiable, lived apart from the whole world, and seemed to be poor—for the rest he knew nothing more—nothing at all!

“Poor!” exclaimed her Honour, “and dressed in that way—such lace!”

The Cornet crimsoned, and merely said—“They are always very well dressed.”

“But who in all the world was the cross gentleman?” asked Julie.

“The gentleman of the house,” answered the Cornet; “he seems to have an unhappy and an irritable temper—for the rest, I do not know the family.”

The Colonel looked sharply at his son, who was evidently embarrassed.

All were silent in the carriage. Her Honour nodded her head as an accompaniment to her own thoughts.

Once the Colonel interrupted the silence, as he said, smiling good-humouredly, “I have yet her ‘*cling, cling*,’ in my ears.”

“*Kling, kling*?” repeated the Cornet, reddening.

“Yes, yes!” replied the Colonel, drily; and all were again silent.

Julie had, it is true, her heart and her eyes full of animated words about the two handsome foreigners, but she did not rightly know upon what ground she stood with regard to her brother’s acquaintance with them, and besides that,

seldom ventured in the presence of her father to give vent to her raptures, from dread of his sarcastic looks, of which she had a panic-terror.

"It is extraordinary," said the Colonel again, "that exactly in that woody region, east of Thorsborg, the rare *Linnæa* bo——."

"Do you not think, papa," interrupted the Cornet, hastily, "that I should close the window; or perhaps papa should not talk just now—so much—the cold mist comes in."

"Thanks for your care, my son; there is no danger for me. I fear more for you—that you may have caught some malady on your botanical excursions—that you have taken cold—have the ague."

"The ague!" said the Cornet, laughing, but reddening at the same time; "one might rather talk about a fever——"

"I will be your doctor," said the Colonel; "and as I see already considerable symptoms, I order you——"

"Thanks most humbly, my best papa! But there is now no danger at all—that I assure you. Besides which, I have much—respect for medicines."

The Colonel was silent. Her Honour sighed. Julie cast arch glances at me. The carriage drew up, we were at home. It was already quite late in the evening.

During supper the Colonel said to his son, "Now, Carl, when were you so fortunate as to meet with your *Linnæa borealis*?"

The Cornet answered briskly, "Exactly to-day, papa!" and taking out his pocket-book, drew from it a little plant, saying, "this little northern flower, which, with the exception of Sweden and Norway, is found only in Switzerland and upon a mountain in America, has a most remarkable smell, particularly in the night-time. It has already begun to dry, but it smells yet—does it not, Julie?"

"Bless me! dear Carl!" exclaimed Julie, "it smells really strong of wormwood!—— or, no—— what do I say?—it smells——"

"Wormwood!" said the Cornet, confusedly, and looked with embarrassment upon his sprig of wormwood; "I have made a mistake—I have lost, I had——"

The Colonel laughed sarcastically, "One must confess,"

said he, "that this *Linnæa borealis* is a most curious plant!"

The person, however, who, soon after this, came to know something more about the *Linnæa borealis*, was her Honour. There existed between mother and son such a heartfelt tenderness, the questions of the one inevitably drew forth the confidence of the other, if this were not volunteered. Of all her children her Honour loved most her eldest son, although she would not confess that her heart knew any difference between them. He of all was the most like her, not only in feature, but in the intrinsic goodness of heart. Besides, the care which his extremely weak and delicate childhood required, had cost her a great deal of her own health and strength, and that, perhaps, more than all the rest, had fettered her maternal heart to the child who was preserved through so many sacrifices. That which costs us much becomes precious to us. Now also was she rewarded by the most heartfelt filial love.

If her Honour knew of any mystery, she did not help us out of our darkness. The Colonel seemed to know no more than we did, because he used frequently to joke in gay humour about botany and *Linnæa borealis*, of which word the Cornet had a real horror—and the utterance of which he always endeavoured to prevent, by the introduction of some new subject, the first that offered.

In the mean time he continued his rambles uninterruptedly; even undertook a little journey on foot to an adjacent district, which would occupy a week; because—but of that hereafter.

The Colonel said with his customary quietness, "In a fortnight the young gentleman will join his regiment, afterwards an expedition to Roslagen will occupy him the whole summer; he will lose his love for botany and the *Linnæa borealis* during that time."

During all this Julie was in her turn in a deplorable condition. Lieutenant Arvid, who in the country missed those subjects of conversation which were furnished by a city life, began in his *tête-à-tête* with his bride, to have nothing to say but, "My little Julie!" to which by way of filling up the pause a kiss always ensued, to which the "little Julie" was sometimes averse. After the lovers had sate beside each other for a long time in silent attention she began to yawn. Then said Arvid, "Thou art sleepy, little Julie."

"Yes," she replied; "and thanks to thee for it," she thought.

"Lean against me, my angel, and get a little nap," said the gentle voice of her future earthly support; "lean against me and the sofa cushion, which I will place thus. I will lean against the other pillow, and also have a nap—that will be divinely beautiful!"

With rather a troubled look, Julie followed the advice, and presently people saw, both forenoon and afternoon, the betrothed sitting and half-slumbering together. Julie often said, to be sure, that it was a sin and a shame thus to sleep away life, but her bridegroom thought that it was thus that one enjoyed it most, and thus, as not only a good little wife but a bride will attend to the wishes of her beloved, Julie took for the present her forenoon and afternoon nap. Once she was heard to say half angrily, in return to Lieutenant Arvid's prayer, that she would consider him as a cushion, "I assure you, that I begin to do so in real earnest."

THE BLIND GIRL.

I see—the night alone.

HER Honour, who now for certainty had discovered the grounds of my supposed melancholy in a probable tendency to consumption, prescribed for me a course of milk diet, and leisurely walks into the fresh air early in the morning.

Perhaps also she did so in order that in an easy manner she might make me the companion of Elisabeth, to whom the physicians had prescribed the same diet. But however that might be, four things were made out: I was melancholy; I had consumption; I should be cured; and I must walk.

I began thus to drink milk, and walk out arm in arm with the silent Elisabeth through the beautiful park, when the birds, especially at this time of the day, struck up concerts, in which they were not disturbed by the gentle steps of the two wanderers, nor by merry words from their lips.

Elisabeth's state of mind was in the beginning cold and unfriendly. She was almost always silent, and the few words which she uttered bore the impression of a diseased and

irritable temper. She often asked, "What o'clock is it?" And upon my reply, there always followed an impatient sigh, "Not more?"

I was silent, because I—because I really did not know what to say—because I dreaded by an imprudent word to wound her restless, sensitive, unhappy soul. I saw her suffer—would so gladly have endeavoured to console her, but knew not what tone I must strike that might beneficially reach her heart. Besides, it seems true that human words have less power to assuage the suffering of a being than this mild, fresh, life-giving spring air which floated around us, than this melodious chorus which swelled forth from the sighing groves, than this rich delicious odour which seemed to be the breath of young nature, which we drew in with ours, and which livingly pressed to the inmost of our souls. Ah, what could I have said, indeed, more beneficial, more tender, more calming, than this beautiful, wonderful poesy of nature!

By degrees Elisabeth's state of mind became gentler. My silent but unobtrusive attentions were no longer repulsed unkindly. She spoke more frequently, and with greater calmness.

One day she said to me, "You are as quiet and kind as nature; it does me good to be with you." As I never, with a single question, sought to intrude into the secrets of her soul, she seemed by degrees to forget altogether that she was surrounded by anything else than that nature in whose bosom the most unfortunate being need not fear to pour forth her sufferings, and who often is the best, the most consoling friend. She often uttered broken sounds—now full of a still sorrow, now mysterious, wild, murmuring; sometimes she sung monotonously, but charmingly, a sort of cradle-song, as if she would hush to sleep the stormy feelings of her heart. This pensive, pleasing song produced in me sometimes exactly that melancholy which her Honour wished to cure.

In her behaviour Elisabeth gave the same play as hitherto to her unrestrained outbreak of feelings. She often stretched forth her arms with vehemence, or made movements with them as if she would remove from her something horrible; sometimes she pressed her hands tightly upon her breast, or

clasped them together upon her brow with an expression of unutterable suffering. Often her movements were so violent and so wild that it seemed to approach an outbreak of insanity. But as soon as our morning promenade was ended, and we drew near home, she regained by degrees her reserved, cold, almost unnaturally stiff demeanour.

One morning when we had sate upon a bench, she said hastily to me, "We sit in the sun—is it not so? I feel its warmth. Let us seek the shade. I do not like the sun, and it has no part in me."

I led her to a bench where a leafy hedge of lilacs kept off the beams of the sun.

"It must be very beautiful to-day," said Elisabeth; "I think that I have never felt such a sweet air." And now she began to question me about the colour of flowers, about trees and birds, about all which surrounded us, beautiful, but for her invisible, and all this with a tone so mournfully gentle, so filled with quiet resignation, that a deep and inward emotion overcame my heart; and some tears, which I sought not to repress, fell from my eyes upon her hand, which rested in mine. She hastily withdrew it, saying, "You weep for me, you can feel compassion for me! Nobody should do so—nobody should pity me—nobody should deplore me—I do not deserve it! You shall no longer be deceived in me—know me—detest me! This heart has wished to commit a crime—this hand has committed a murder! I advance now—I know it—I feel it—towards death, but towards a quiet, almost easy death, far from shame and dishonour—and I had deserved to end my days by the hand of the executioner upon the gallows."

It seemed at these words as if the day darkened around me—I was silent in quiet horror. The blind girl was silent too; first with an expression of wild despair, then with a laugh of scorn upon her pale lips. At length this passed off in an expression of gloomy dejection, as she softly and slowly asked, "Is anybody near me now?"

"I am here," replied I, as calmly and as gently as possible, for I felt how much more the unhappy guilty one needs the kindness of his fellow-creatures than the innocent sufferer.

"Soon," said Elisabeth, and laid her hands upon her breast; "soon will the flames of hell, which rage here, be ex-

tinguished! Silent death, I know thy friendly approach! The fanning of thy waving wings gives to me at times a moment's alleviation. Soon will this cold heart rest, stiff in the cold earth! Motherly earth, thou wilt clasp in thy breast the weary child, whom no maternal heart, no father's breast, no friend's sustaining arm has known and blessed, during the whole of life's long, long day! But why do I complain? That I may receive the alms of despicable pity? And not once do I deserve that! I am a miserable being!"

She was silent; but, after a pause, began again:

"It is strange!—to-day—to-day—after so many hundred days of the silently-sustained misery of life, my heart will speak—will, like a long-fettered captive, breathe a freer air—will step forth to-day, regardless of the feelings of horror and detestation which the view of the miserable criminal must awake in others. The flames will now blaze up once more, and cast abroad a light, even though a ghastly one, before it is extinguished for ever.

"Turn from me your face, Beata! Follow the example of the sun—it is of no consequence—or rather is it right so—I have now something to lose—your pity. Well, I have deserved this punishment."

She was again silent. Vehement and painful feelings seemed to shake her soul, and an indescribable expression of enthusiasm and melancholy was painted on her beautiful countenance, as she stretched forth her arms longingly, and exclaimed:

"Fatherland, freedom, honour! Could I have lived, and fought, and died for you! I should not then have been the wretched fallen being that I now am. Oh, if I had been a man! Then would not my heart have beaten fruitlessly for you, the worthy goal of the eagle-flight of the soul! These flames, which now consume my criminal breast, had then been kindled upon your altars, and blazed on high, a clear and holy flame of sacrifice. But now! Oh, how unfortunate is the woman to whom nature gives a soul, full of fire, strength of feeling, and enthusiasm! Unfortunate the woman who sees in the narrow circle within which she is called upon, quietly and uniformly, to live and work, only a joyless condition, a prison, a grave of life!

"I was this unhappy one. Oh, how have I suffered

through this contest against destiny! *This* was the dragon with which I fought—which I fancied myself elected to conquer; and it has thrown me down into the dust, crushed me, trampled upon me like a worm!

“In the haughtiness of my youthful emotions I was proud of my fire, of the depth and expansion of my feeling. I disdained to regulate myself by reason, to acknowledge any other power than my own will. I felt that I had wings. I would fly. I would raise myself above everything.—I have fallen!

“Oh that my dying voice could be heard by every woman who, fiery and impassioned, believes herself formed to be something great, splendid, and astonishing; who fancies that the breadth and expansion of feeling wherewith she is gifted, entitle her to despise the silent world, within which her place in the social ordination is assigned, which is appointed to her both by divine and human laws. Oh that she could see me, fallen by over-stepping these laws, and hear me warningly say, ‘Misguided, pitiable being! struggle against thyself—against thy own impassioned soul! Behold the dragon with which thou oughtest to contend—whose fire will consume thee, and be the bane of others, if thou do not subject it. Submit thyself to the laws of destiny and society—combat with thyself, or thou wilt suffer, and wilt be crushed like me!’

“For me it is too late to combat—the power is gone, the will is gone! The fire has the upper hand. The temple burns, burns, burns! and will burn, till the winds find in it nothing but ashes. I have myself kindled my funeral pile—I consume and suffer!

“Thou world around me; full of harmony, beauty, and song; which, like an awakened, smiling child, surrounded me with caressing arms; in vain thou smilest, in vain thou flatterest. I understand thee not—I suffer!

“When I was young—it is a century since then—there reigned already in my breast, by turns, heaven and hell. Yet then I was nearer to the first—now I see the heaven no longer. When I was young, very young, I loved already with the whole strength of passion. My first love was for my native land. You smile perhaps, find perhaps this feeling ridiculous in the breast of a girl. So have others done; and yet—my native land! The noble, beloved land of Sweden,

had all thy sons had my heart, then wouldst thou now be that which thou once wast—the home of heroes—the lion of Europe!

“You have read—have heard speak, of martyrs—of the fearful torments, of the almost incredible cruelties which the friends of freedom and fatherland have suffered in all ages; and you have turned away your eyes in horror, withdrawn your thoughts. I read also, I heard also of the fate of these, but thirsted to share them; dwelt with curiosity upon all pangs, all torments of hell; they seemed to me the bliss of heaven, if borne, oh fatherland, for thee! I besought from heaven for the honour, the joy of these!

“Whilst the flower of my youth unfolded, and my feelings swelled like the streams of spring, the murder-chariot of war rolled through Europe—but only an echo of the clangour of arms, which glittered forth from contending masses, reached our peaceful land. It reached my heart, and awoke there the wildest, the most transporting feelings. Ah, I was only a woman! people laughed at my enthusiasm, they ridiculed it. I wept the bitterest tears of indignation, and concealed my fervour in my own breast.

“Peace was made, and the names *fatherland* and *freedom*, which in the blaze of the fires of war seemed so splendid and bright, lost, under the shadow of the olive, many of their enchanting rays. Even in my breast these beautiful names lost their magical power, since no longer was united to them thoughts of danger, combat, and honourable death. Peace was made; the excitement of mind was stilled. The world which surrounded me was more common-place and uniform than before. But my heart remained like itself, desirous to live, desirous to labour; I was as before, and more than before, ambitious to attain the splendid heights of existence, and was repulsed again for ever to my life of nothingness by my fellow-creatures, the laws of society, conventional life, and established proprieties. Never was a galley-slave so unhappy as I. Restless as the spirit of the tempest my soul agitated itself, embracing the world, it desired to raise itself to the stars, pressed through the covering of every feeling the impediments to all knowledge; and my body and my observation remained fettered to that which is the most despised, and the most trivial in life. I lived as it were, two

existences in one—and the one was the torment of the other.

“The only passion permitted by the world to the heart of woman—in education its development mostly takes place through the reading of novels, sentimental poetry, and such like—is love. I became acquainted with it. People say that it ennobles the woman, that it creates her happiness—it has conducted me to crime, it conducts me now to my grave!

“My father died. He never understood, never loved me, never made me happy! why did he give me life? Had my mother lived, oh she would have understood, would have loved me! I have heard much said of her; she had suffered much—combated much. I was the offspring of her last sigh, which I drew in with my first breath—with the first and last mother's kiss. Therefore my whole life also was perhaps like to a work of death—a strift, an eternal combat. Soon, however, it will be at an end!

“My guardian, from whom I had lived hitherto very distant, took me to live with him. You know him—but no, you know him not! You fancy him to be a god upon earth—and he is a stern, inflexible man—an irreconcilable, severe judge. Oh how stern has he not been with me! How I loved him! I had nobody and nothing upon earth. He was everything to me. I saw nothing and nobody except him. I told him so. Oh if he had only had some gentleness, some mercy towards me! But he was only severe. His eye was cold, his word austere. I was in despair, but I adored him nevertheless.

“I was handsome, I was intellectual; full of youth, and life, and feeling. As the waves in vain strike against the rock which resists and repels them, so in vain were all my feelings, all my natural gifts, offered like a sacrifice on his altar. Ah, the waves may yet bathe with tears the hard breast which breaks and repulses them! I could not weep upon the hand which thrust me back—which extended to me the chalice of death. He whom I valued and loved above all things, he called my feeling for him criminal. I know not whether it were so or no. Common it was not—and perhaps not suitable for earth. I should not at that time have shunned the glance of angels into my heart—they would have understood me. The angels of heaven love

indeed!—and must love in a higher and purer degree than the children of earth, for they love the highest good—they love God! Ah, he was a God to me! Why was he only a vengeful, austere judge? His judgment of me caused me to despise myself, and adore him only the more!

“At one moment worldly pride arose in my breast; I wished to conquer my passion—to punish the inflexible severity of its object.

“I betrothed myself to a young man—good and amiable I believe—who loved me; I do not remember much about him. I wished to punish, and thought I could do so by this means; yes—because sometimes there passed through me the belief that—I was loved by him who was everything to me. Can love be the only fire which does not possess the power to warm the object about which all its burning rays collect?—And besides that, I was so beautiful—and he was, I know it, weak towards female beauty. Yet what have I said! when indeed was he weak? When did I see him waver—the proud, noble, strong? Oh, I—I was the weak—the bewildered, the befooled, the miserable!

“Preparations were made for my marriage; the bridal dresses were all ready; they surrounded me with presents, caresses, and flatteries. I looked upon him whom I loved—he was very pale.

“The marriage-day came—the hour for the ceremony came—I looked at him, he was pale; there burned in his eyes a gloomy flame; but he said—nothing. In the last important moment—I looked again at him—at that time he turned his face from me; his handsome, noble, beloved face, he turned from me—with a look—oh memory! I said, *Yes!* Hell was in my heart!

“That same evening I went forth and hid myself—hid myself from every one. It was strange in my brain and in my breast. How they sought for me!—ha, ha, ha! there was a commotion!

“I had some money with me, and succeeded, by travelling under an assumed name, in reaching one of the sea-ports of Sweden.

“I saw the sea—a storm agitated it—the morning heaven stood above it with red flames. I remember it yet—ah! it was beautiful! I sate upon a rock, and looked out at the

sea. The immeasurable opened its arms for me; billow rolled over billow — roaring, foaming — thither — thither — in the infinite, towards the unbounded distance, where ocean and heaven embraced each other. It roared and raged — hu! it was fearful and magnificent. Something like a fresh gale swept through my troubled breast. I felt myself refreshed, strengthened. The billows spoke a language which did me good. They whispered, they beckoned to me, ‘Thither! thither!’ Half the day I sate silent upon the rock; looked out at the sea and listened; saw the sun ascend from the waves, saw the sails with white dove-like wings upon the blue sea, under the blue heaven, floating away towards some far-off peaceful shore. I listened to the admonitory voices of the billows, and determined to follow their call.

“I wished to go to America. I wished to go far, far from the earth which he trod, from the air which he breathed; from the language, the manners, which were his.

“The day was come on which I was to set out—it was now the hour. I was about to ascend into the ship of my deliverance, its sails floated merrily in a favourable wind; soon should I be rocked upon the heaving waves, which sung so pleasantly—amid their song, all at once was heard the sound of a voice—I felt my arm seized—and dragged back by force. Terrific words were spoken to me by a beloved voice. I scarcely understood them—everything appeared to me strange—incomprehensible. I was brought back to my husband like a prisoner. At that time I felt something extraordinary in my brain and heart—it was a dance, a whirling—and as it were a gnawing grief. It increased and increased in violence—I became what people call—mad!

“The same hand which led me with force from the shore of deliverance, now fettered my hands. *He* whom I loved so infinitely—for whom I would have given my life a thousand times—*he*—laid me in chains—and conducted me to—the madhouse!

“A time, without time, passed over for me there—days, nights, mornings, evenings, all were alike—all were a blank. Of this time I remember nothing—only this, that I several times heard a well-known voice mention my name; also this, that once somebody near me said, ‘Yet if she could but weep!’ I wondered then very much what all this meant,

and often repeated, in a sort of confused uneasiness, 'weep?'

"One day—I know not where they had conducted me—nor with whom I was. Everything floated before my eyes in wild confused masses. Then all at once I perceived a roaring, like that of a stormy sea; but the roaring was possessed of a sound, a tone—swelled in wonderful and mighty harmony, sunk into a pleasant and grave melody.

"With this a voice united itself, which sang clear and still—

'O Lamb of God which takest away the sins of the world.'

"Like a cloud which, full of the dew of heaven, sinks down upon a hard barren earth, thus sank down upon my stiffened soul the holy harmony, and extinguished its scorching lava.

"Impelled now by a strange power, I began loudly to accompany the singing, and sang with a full remembrance of the words and the music. It was that which I heard when I received the communion first—when I, with holy feelings, bowed my knee, and saw heaven open itself above me. At the words,

'Give us thy peace!'

my tears began to flow, and from this hour my consciousness returned. Yes, that—but peace—ah, I felt not peace; and ever since, and perhaps for ever, has the dove of heaven kept aloof from me.

"Ah, I did not deserve that it should come to my breast! there was no submission, no sanctification, no desire for it.

"My husband was dead. I was glad of it. I came again to the house of my guardian; I wished to do so; my heart had undergone a change, and I believed that I hated as much as I had loved before. I wished again to see him for whom I had suffered so much—see him to defy him; to let him see, and if possible feel, that even I could be proud, cold, disdainful. I wished to humble him. Adored by wife and children, and loving them in return, I saw him stand calmly and happily in the bosom of his family. For all—for the very meanest, he had kindness; for me he had only a look more cold, more proud, more severe than before.

"I felt all the chords of my soul vibrate. A horrible feeling took possession of my breast. His actual coldness mocked my assumed coldness; his strength, my weakness; his calmness, my perpetual disquiet. He had acted severely towards me. I thought that he, in his happy pride, trampled me like a worm in the dust. His image pursued me; sleeping or waking I saw it alone. It stood before me like a giant; he stifled, he stopped my breath. If he were not, then I should breathe! If he were not, then *I* should be! If he no longer lived, then he would cease to be my life's torment. Struck out from the number of the living, he would soon cease to exist in the memory of the living. I would give myself air—revenge—punish him—revenge! To-day, to-day his calm look defied me—to-morrow!

"Crime, like a word, the offspring of thought, springs forth and appears often like something harmless; but its consequences extend themselves through eternity.

"One evening I mixed arsenic in a glass of almond milk which my guardian was about to drink.

"I had some by me to mix for myself; for it occurred to me that I should feel—remorse. Have, *you* felt remorse?"

I was in no mood to answer.

Elisabeth continued: "After I had done this horrible deed, I went up to my own room; I felt myself calm and cold; marble cold was my body; my heart seemed the same; its throbbing was stupified. I stood before the fire warming my icy hands, when I heard violent movements and an anxious noise in the house.

"Anxiety then took hold of me. I went down and saw my victim, pale as death, almost without consciousness, leaning back on the sofa, surrounded by wife and children, who were sunk in an agony of despair.

"As I entered, my guardian cast a look upon me; never shall I forget it! Then a burning spirit of hell approached me, and seized with sharp, bloody claws upon my heart. *It was remorse!*

"I confessed my crime aloud; called for the curse of them whom I had made unhappy. I threw myself on the floor, and my forehead kissed the dust. Nobody raised

against me a voice of accusation ; but no hand was extended to me. I crept to the feet of him whom I had murdered ; I wanted to kiss them ; but another foot thrust me back—it was his wife. I kissed it, and was so happy as to lose consciousness.

“I continued for a long time in perfect bewilderment of mind. When I recovered my consciousness, I saw my guardian standing beside my bed, heard his recovery from his own lips, heard him speak my forgiveness.

“So sunk, so deeply sunk was I, that I would rather have heard his curse. It would, it seemed to me, have made my unworthiness less deep, and him less great.

“The wildest storm of every passion raged in my heart. I cursed the light, and the light withdrew its beams from my unworthy eyes, and eternal night enclosed my body as well as my soul.

“The storms of nature are short ; calm, clear days succeed. In the human breast the hurricanes of passion rage long, and have only a moment’s calm. I knew such, but it was the calm of night—the stupefaction of life—stiffening—the cradle-song of darkness. It ceased in order to give place to a new rending, burning fire, which the eternally flowing fountains of tears never could quench. I felt an infinitely oppressive, burning desire for *reconciliation*.

“Oh, the death of the cross—torments, bloody sweat, unending pain ! to suffer it, and through it reconciliation ; that, that had been delight ! But blind, like a mummy among living beings ; a criminal broken off from humanity ; a nullity, a nothing—I stood, despicable, despised ! Oh, misery, misery, misery !

“That I might, however, at the least, punish myself, I determined to live—to live—a mark for the scorn of those whom I loved and honoured ; to repulse every compassionate hand—and to torment myself as much as possible.

“I left once more the family whose happiness I had nearly destroyed, and for several years passed a wretched life. I returned because death had laid his hand upon my breast. My guardian wished it. He shall govern my existence till its last breath. I can no longer help it—it is the decree of fate. I have power no longer—with me all is past—past !”

She ceased. I began now to speak some calm, admonitory words. I spoke of patience, of submission—I mentioned—prayer.

“Prayer!” repeated Elisabeth, with a bitter smile. “Listen, Beata. For the whole of many years I have prayed—night and day, at all times, at every moment; I have lain upon my knees till the cold has stiffened my limbs to ice, and prayed, ‘O Father, take this cup from me!’ Prayer has become to me like a stone which has been thrown upwards and falls down again and wounds the breast of the sufferer—I pray—never more!”

“Oh, pray—oh, pray!” I said, weeping; “pray only with a right mind—God pities—gives strength to the pure will.”

“God?” said the Blind, with a gloomy voice. “Oh, world—which I shall never more see;—sun, which no more will light my eyes—thou speakest of a God! Heart, eternal disquiet! his name sounds in thy throbbing. Conscience, chastiser, thou proclaimest revenge! Fire of love—thou life of my life! from thy flames I divine thy eternal origin. But, bright angel—thou, *faith*—which canst show me my God—thee I know not. I had been early cast down into the abyss of doubt. I deny not—but I believe not. I see—darkness alone.”

“And the clearness of reconciliation? And the beaming glory of the Crucified?—and Jesus?” I asked, with astonishment and horror.

The Blind was silent a moment, with an expression of bitter melancholy, and then said:

“I once read about a vision or dream—and many a time has its spectral form arisen, horrible and sad, in my inward being.

“In the middle of the night,* shaken by invisible hands, the doors of the church sprang open. A crowd of dejected shadows thronged around the altar, and only their breasts heaved and moved with violence. The children rested, however, quietly in their graves.

“Then descended from on high down to the altar a beaming shape, noble, sublime, and which bore the stamp of unobliterated suffering. The dead exclaimed, ‘O Christ! is

* Jean Paul’s Dream.

there no God?' He answered, 'There is none!' All the shades began to tremble violently; and Christ continued: 'I have gone through the worlds, I have ascended above the suns—and there also is there no God. I have trodden to the extremest bounds of creation, I have looked down into hell, and I have exclaimed, "Father, where art thou?" But I heard there only the rain, which fell down, drop after drop, in the depth—and the eternal storm, which no order leads, alone replied to me. I then raised my eyes to the vault of heaven, and found there only space—dark, silent, boundless. Eternity rested upon chaos, and gnawed it, and consumed itself slowly. "Renew your bitter, heartrending cry of lamentation, and disperse yourselves, for all is over!"' The unconsolated shadows vanished. The church soon was empty; but all at once—horrible sight!—hastened forth the dead children, which in their course had awoke in the churchyard, and threw themselves down before the majestic form of the altar, and exclaimed, 'Jesus, have we no father?' and he replied, but with a torrent of tears, 'We are all fatherless; you and I, we have no——.'"

Here the Blind broke off, as if in horror of this diseased, delirious fantasy; was silent a moment; but after this clasped together her hands, stretched forth her arms as she uttered a wild, penetrating cry, full of the most horrible despair.

At this moment hasty steps approached us, and the Colonel stood suddenly before us, fixing upon me an inquiring and uneasy look. The Blind, who knew his step, let fall her hands, trembling, but raised them again quickly towards him, beseeching him, with a heartrending expression, "Be reconciled! be kind to me! I am so unhappy! If I am again mad—do not take me to the madhouse! It will soon be all over with me. Let beloved hands, at least, close my eyelids!"

Compassion and deep pain agitated the countenance of the Colonel. He looked long at Elisabeth, seated himself beside her, placed his arm sustainingly around her waist, and let her head rest upon his breast.

It was the first time that I had seen him tender towards her. The tears flowed slowly down her pale cheeks. She was beautiful, but beautiful like a fallen angel, whose expres-

sion of despair and deep shame show that she felt herself unworthy of the pity that was given to her.

I now saw her Honour approaching us in the distance. When she saw Elisabeth in the arms of the Colonel, she paused for a moment, but again advanced to us, although with some astonishment expressed in her face. The Colonel remained still. Elisabeth seemed to see nothing around her. Her Honour came near to us, the glances of husband and wife met, and—melted together in a clear and friendly beam. From a common feeling they extended to each other their hand.

Her Honour caressed Elisabeth, and spoke tenderly to her—she answered merely by sobs. After a moment the Colonel rose, and giving one arm to Elisabeth, his wife took the other, and softly and with tender care they led her home between them.

I remained alone quietly in the park. Amid uneasy and painful feelings, I looked up to the mild vernal blue heaven, with inward longing that its clearness might beam down into my soul.

During the wandering through a quiet destiny, saved from the agitations which visit so many pilgrims of life, and sustaining in a peaceful breast a living faith, a sanctifying hope; the misfortunes, suffering, and despair of my fellow-creatures been, for the most part, the cloud, which at times has concealed my beautiful sun and the gladness of my life, which many times has made me look up on high with a painful—"Wherefore?"

But the answer is not long delayed, because it has been demanded with the inward voice of prayer. Calming winds have wafted through my excited soul, and have whispered:

"The clouds fly, the sun remains still. The crime, pains, and despair of human beings cannot dim the goodness of the Creator. We see merely a small part. Those die—change. God is unchangeable."

In vain is it that we doubt, that we murmur, that we disquiet ourselves. All the erring paths of life have a point of exit. In the moment when the darkness seems to us the deepest, we are perhaps the nearest to the light. After the hour of midnight the hours of morning strike; and were it

even the bell of death, which announced the hour of deliverance, what could we indeed say to ourselves more consolatory, if to us the labyrinth of life has been narrow and dark, than, "A door will open, and we shall come forth—to the light!" Let it seem to us ever so narrow and so closed against us—we know it—"A door will open to us!" Well, then—let us wait, let us hope!

Elisabeth's state of mind remained from this day yet more unquiet. She had now and then attacks of actual insanity, and the care and anxiety for her were redoubled.

Her suffering and her painful existence diffused frequently a gloom over the remainder of the family. In particular it seemed to operate prejudicially on the health and temper of the Colonel.

That I may not weary the attention of my readers by fixing their eyes upon a picture so dark, I will conduct them now to another. It is bright and gay; in it appear united the youth of the earth and the human heart. We will call it—

SPRING AND LOVE.

"I, I too was in Arcadia!"

INNOCENT joys! innocent cares! ye friends of my young years—angels, who, amid smiles and tears, opened to me the portals of life, upon you I call to-day! And you also, thoughts, pure as the blue of heaven! feelings, warm as the beams of the May sun! hope, as fresh as the breath of the spring morning! I call you—come, oh, come to revive my wearied mind.

I will sing of spring and love, youth and gladness;—pleasant and fresh memories, the nightingales of youth; lift up your voices, I will set your songs to music, and be yet once more enchanted by your melody!

On the two-and-twentieth day of May ascended a clear spring-sun, and tinged with gold-yellow beams the eyelids of Cornet Carl. Stars of the order of the sword glittered, as it were, by dozens before his dreaming eyes. He endeavoured eagerly to see them more clearly, strove to open his eyes—

woke, and saw the stars vanish before the splendid beams of day, upon whose prisms of light millions of atoms danced.

A quarter of an hour after this he was to be seen, with his game-bag upon his shoulder, brushing through the fresh morning dews. It was a spring morning, beautiful as that described by Böttiger :

All nature lay so glad and still ;
 Green stood each molehill there ;
 And every lark sang sweetly shrill,
 To every floweret's prayer.
 The little brooks flowed softly on ;
 And o'er the lake's calm breast,
 Through reeds she went, the silent swan,
 So rich in song, in silver vest.

Up to the sun the eagle flew,
 Its brightness thence to draw ;
 From flowers the bees their nectar drew,
 And emmets dragged their straw.
 In the rose's cup the butterfly
 Its purple wings concealed ;
 The maple green, that grew hard by,
 Two cooing doves revealed.

A young man there, in joyous mood,
 Was walking in the shade ;
 The spring-time revelled in his blood,
 And love his eye displayed.

In this young man we now see Cornet Carl, who, in the affluence of pleasant and fresh feelings, which the morning hours of life and nature united alone bestow, looked around him—now up to the bright blue heaven, now down to that reflected in the diamonds of the grass glittering in morning dews ; now to the far distance, where the rosy-hued light clouds withdrew themselves ever farther and farther.

A delicious balmy odour came caressingly upon the wings of the zephyrs——

Thus far had I written, amid the ever increasing warmth of the feelings, when I suddenly perceived so strong a fragrance of rose-essence that my head became quite confused ; at the same time I became aware of a buzzing and humming around me. I lifted my pen (which just at this moment was as if it were possessed) from the paper, and looked around me.

What a sight ! The room was full of little shining cherubs, with garlands of roses in their hands, garlands of roses round

their heads, and whose incessantly trembling wings occasioned that extraordinary buzzing. The longer I observed these wonderful beings, the more dazzling and bewildering seemed to me the colours which shone in their eyes, upon their cheeks, upon their pinions, and so on. And as I turned my eyes from them, upon other objects—behold, then seemed to me my ink white, my paper black, my yellow walls were green, myself (in the glass) *couleur de rose*. No wonder was it that the rose odour mounted up into my head.

I now recognised the little rascals. I had seen them before; and who has not seen, who does not know them? It is they who play their jugglery upon the girl of seventeen, and turn her head a little. It is they who confuse the eye of the youth, and let him read in the tablets of his future, "*Pleasure and usefulness*," instead of "*Usefulness and pleasure*." It is they who bear the blame of people giving themselves so much trouble about nothing, running thirty miles after a jack-o'-lantern; and that they many a time cannot see clearly enough to lift their hands and catch hold of their good luck which goes close beside them. It is they who, like April weather, travel about, deceiving the whole world, and making fools of the whole world; who contrive that P. gets married, and that B. remains unmarried, and that both do wrong; who occasion A. to say "Yes," J. to say "No;" and they both say wrong. It is they who throng even into the banking-house of Beräkenman, make him confused in his bills, and cause him to write down a seven instead of a two. It is they, in short, who buzz so unmercifully, humming and whirring around the bard, and often cause him to produce that which has no sound reason in it, to paint reality with false colours, and to mislead himself and others. Charming phantasmagoria of the imagination, little rose-coloured rogues! Who knows you not? Who does not avoid, does not willingly chase you away, who has once experienced your tricks and your cheats? Who, in particular, who lives and weaves through the *rez-de-chaussée* of every-day life, works with discretion and order to throw his shuttle into the simple web, must he not take care, more than any one else, that he does not allow his brain to be mystified and his thoughts bewildered by your rose odour? I saw in what danger I stood, upon what a dangerous path my pen had begun to

travel. I laid it down, rose up, drank two glasses of water, opened the window, breathed the yet snow-cold April air, looked up to the bright heaven, looked down into the court where they were hanging out clothes, next turned my attention upon three cats, which always sate in a ground-floor window opposite to me, observing, with philosophical looks and little motions of the head, the world around them; with one word, I allowed my looks to take hold of the every-day world around me, and come out from the world of phantasy which raised me upon the wings of my youthful remembrance, and spread itself around me. One of the pretty little rogues had whispered in my ear, "One may permit a little falsehood, merely to produce a good effect;" and if I had not in time looked about me, and bethought myself, then, perhaps, the reader might have happened to see such a spring, and such a love, the like of which is nowhere to be found, unless, perhaps, in Arcadia.

When I returned from the window, the air of the room was free and fresh. The little rose-coloured shapes of delusion had vanished, and I again saw all objects in their true and natural colours.

The picture of reality must resemble a clear stream, which, during its course, reflects with purity and truth the objects which mirror themselves in its waves, and through whose crystal one can see its bed and all that lies thereon. All that the painter or the author, in the representation of these, can permit to his fancy, is to act the part of a sunbeam, which, without changing the peculiarity of an object, yet gives to all hues a more lively brightness, lets the sparkling of the waves become more diamond-like, and lights up with a purer brilliancy even the sandy bed of the brook.

In the strength of this new discovery, I assume with calmness the part of sunbeams, allotted to me in all discretion, and allow it to pour its brightness over a true representation of spring and love. But sunshine may weary, like everything else, when it lasts too long (as, for example, in Egypt), therefore I will allow my sunbeams merely here and there to glance forth during our wandering through the elysium of youth, and to light up only the places where I desire that my reader should pleasantly delay his steps; or, also, where

I have a desire to sit down to warm and rest myself. Let us now step out of the shadow into

THE FIRST SUNBEAM.

It shines through a gloomy pine-wood, and presents us with a view of an open space. In the background we see that little grey house which figured in the scenes of a foregoing chapter. In the foreground we see the green shores which are bathed by the clear waves of a lake. Granite rocks rear up here and there their unshapely forms, and stand like sentinels around the heaven-blue palace of the Water-lady; young birches peep forth beside this with green crowns, and rock their branches, rich in joy, in the west-wind which plays around, full of life and delight—in one word, full of *spring*.

On the shore of the lake, in the green birch-wood, we perceive a young man and a young lady sitting beside each other upon the flower-decorated grass. They look happy—they seem to enjoy nature, themselves, everything. He tells her something; his eyes beam; now they look up to heaven, now glance around, with an expression of proud, blessed consciousness; now they rest for a long time upon her, as if they would read into her soul. Now he strikes his breast; he stretches forth his arms, as if he would embrace the whole world; he speaks with all the warmth of a deep and inward devotion, and must therefore most certainly persuade. She listens kindly to his words; they seem to please her; she smiles, sometimes amid tears, sometimes with an expression of surprise and admiration; clasps together or lifts up her hands with an exclamation of lovely delight, and looks in an especial manner all the more convinced. Convinced of what? Of the young man's love?

Pish, pish!

Must it be of love directly?

No—convinced that Gustaf Wasa was the greatest king; Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest knight which ever lived; that Charles the Twelfth was as great as Napoleon, as well as that *the Swedish people were of all people the first and foremost on the earth.*

Some of my readers, who have a particularly good memory, or else an uncommon faculty for guessing, may perhaps send up the rocket-like idea:

"Here have we certainly Cornet Carl and his *Linnæa borealis*, or the handsome *Hermina*!"

So it was.

"But how have they made each other's acquaintance?" asks some one perhaps.

I answer, see the Old Testament, First Book of Moses, twenty-fourth chapter. Eleazar's acquaintance with Rebecca. The modifications which are caused by the difference in ancient and modern times, manners, and modes of speech, between an Idyllian scene in Mesopotamia in the time of the Patriarchs and one in Sweden in the nineteenth century, are not so important as to induce me to give a new sketch of a scene which would only give occasion to every one to repeat Solomon's tiresome, but true proverb, "There is nothing new under the sun;" and besides, would excite in me the unpleasant feeling of giving a feeble copy of a beautiful original—but enough; here also was a weary traveller, a well, a young maiden who came with a pitcher to draw water, and who gave to the traveller to drink. This one had to be sure no camels, but still a gentle, thankful heart, impenetrable to all love, excepting Christian. And this beautiful weakness and this noble strength caused him to accompany that kind maiden to her home, and carry for her her pitcher of water.

Since we have now taken a draught of light (for, in order not to offend the Temperance Society, I will not call it a dram) of the first, we will go over to the

SECOND SUNBEAM,

Which will give us a sight of the Wood-family, as well as an insight into Cornet Carl's heart, which may afford us an oversight of that which may be the intention of fate regarding him, and may lead to moral reflection on the superintendence which it is good for every one to have over his heart amid the magic play of life.

If *Hermina* might with justice be compared to Rebecca, yet the Baron K——, *Hermina*'s stepfather, had not the least resemblance to the hospitable Bethuel. Cold and un-

friendly in the extreme, he almost repulsed the young wanderer. His wife, the already announced Wood-lady, was not much kinder. It seemed as if she felt both fear and vexation to have been discovered in that hiding-place. But no one could long be fearful, or cold and unfriendly, towards a young man like Cornet Carl. His candour, his amiable and fresh cheerfulness, the goodness which emanated from his whole being, his simplicity, together with a certain noble grace in his deportment, which he derived from his father; his careless, free, gentle look, which always met clearly and calmly that of others, and attached to him persons of the most dissimilar temperaments, characters, and minds, making them always happy with him. People felt themselves involuntarily inclined to put confidence in him, wished to live in his society, as they wished to live in open natural scenery—because in such they feel life to be lighter, themselves happier and better; because we there—but what is the use of making a memorandum of that which everybody knows by heart.

Cornet Carl wished to captivate, and captivated actually both Baroness K—— and her husband, so that they assented to his desire of visiting them again, if (and this was made an express condition) he would promise that to no one, and not even to his family, would he mention his acquaintance with them, or their place of residence.

The Cornet promised this, because—because he felt a particular, indescribable desire to come again.

A few days were sufficient to make him aware of the singular and unhappy misunderstandings which reigned in this family; but it was a long time before he understood the causes of them. Baron K—— was a Swede, his wife and stepdaughter Italians, who had arrived with him in Sweden about two months before. Their dresses were splendid and remarkable, and elegant in a high degree. Their behaviour, their mode of speech, their accomplishments, their talents, betrayed that they belonged to the higher and more refined circles of society; and yet they lived now in want of many of the necessaries of life.—N.B. of those which become necessary to the effeminate children of the world. Excepting one single room in which, as it were, was heaped together all the splendour which had been rescued from a shipwreck of

fortune, all in the house exhibited actual poverty. The daily food which the handsome Italians enjoyed, was no better than that which was common to every peasant family in Sweden. The Cornet, for his part, always declared that there was no better diet than herring and potatoes.

Between Baron K—— and his wife it was almost always stormy weather. There seemed to be between them now the most vehement love, and now the most decided hatred, which sometimes in the deportment of the Baroness assumed an expression of proud disdain, whilst he gave vent to expressions of anger and rage. Scenes often occurred between the unhappy pair, in which they mutually made the most bitter reproaches and accusations; the most insignificant trifles could give occasion thereto. An almost senseless rage on his side, exclamations of despair and tears on hers, mostly ended such scenes. The character of the Baroness seemed fundamentally to be noble; but she was, at the same time, inflexible, proud, and passionate in the extreme. Her husband, at the same time weak and despotic, was of an outrageous and unbroken temper; only in moments of a kind of remorseful calm, which he sometimes had, might it be suspected that here also existed a nobler nature—a something which deserved to be loved.

Patient, kind, and gentle, as a suffering angel, stood Hermina, spreading the snow-white wings of her innocence reconcilingly between these natures, angered and embittered in the strife of passion.

She was what is called *a beautiful spirit*. But this was not born so, like her lovely body. It was formed by early suffering, early experience of domestic sorrow and trouble, especially through an early awakening of religious feeling, which enabled her to bear with patience, to resign with smiles, sacrificing her pain to Heaven, and working full of love and unwearingly upon earth. To lessen her mother's suffering, and to obtain for her somewhat more of comfort, she took upon herself even the coarsest business of the house, which otherwise would have been done by the one maid of the family. And it was affecting to see that lovely, ideal, accomplished being, working like a maid-servant, carrying burdens under which she sunk; that is to say, under which she would have sunk, had not Cornet Carl come and set things

in order, and taken the burdens and carried them upon his own shoulders. From the hour in which he came, there was a great change for Hermina. As Jacob served Laban for the beautiful Rachel, so did Cornet Carl Baron K—— serve, to alleviate Hermina's pain. He hunted and fished, provided stores for the kitchen, and was only with difficulty prevented from being cook himself, when he saw how the beautiful face and hands of Hermina would be burnt by the fire. Help of any other kind he dared not offer in their poverty, to these proud and high-minded people.

Hermina had hitherto served her mother almost like a slave, but without being rewarded with the tenderness which she so well deserved. The Baroness K—— seemed accustomed to receive sacrifices without thanks; still less did she seem willing to make any herself.

She bore with difficulty the troubles of adversity and poverty in which she saw herself placed. She required that Hermina, as well as herself, should continually be both tastefully and handsomely dressed, and which a very rich wardrobe, brought from Italy, enabled her to be. It seemed as if she wished in these relics of a departed pomp and splendour to find consolation for her present fate; or as if she could not believe that this fate was actually serious, but merely a momentary enchantment, which might be dissipated at any hour; as if she expected that some fairy's wand would change the little grey house into a palace; and she held herself therefore in readiness, in a dress suitable to her rank and her dignity, to receive visitors and congratulations.

Hermina was treated by her stepfather at the same time with indifference and severity, and one saw plainly, that that which she did for him, she did not do for his sake—but for that of God.

From the moment when the Cornet came into the house, he acquired there a sort of power, which increased daily, and this he used to make Hermina's life happier.

Baron K—— was for the most part absent during the day, and did not return till evening; sometimes also he remained two or three days away. During these intervals of peace, the Cornet contrived to procure for Hermina a liberty which she never knew before, and which she now enjoyed with childish delight. He induced her mother, who had a feeling for the

beauties of nature, to take long walks in the wild but romantic district. Botany had formerly been her favourite pleasure; the Cornet revived her taste for it—sought for flowers everywhere (even I fancy where there were none to be found), that he might convince the handsome Italian, who was charmed with the abundant vegetation of her native land, that Sweden was as rich in flowers as it was in heroes and iron. At least it was certain (and that he himself acknowledged afterwards) that he had not the least diffidence in representing the mountain cudweed, trefoil, dodder, the marsh ledum, the sweet gale, wormwood, tansy, and such like, as most uncommon and remarkable productions of nature.

He mentioned in particular, as the most beautiful thing in nature, that wonderfully charming flower, which has derived its name from “the world’s greatest naturalist, the Swedish Linnæus.” He tried to inspire the Baroness and Hermina with the greatest possible desire to find this miracle of a plant. Every day he had new suspicions about their being able to find it in some new district; he sought long—long and well, and discovered it only at that moment in which he discovered his love.

These walks gave the Cornet continual opportunities of being with Hermina. He gave her his arm in walking; when they rested he shaded her from the sunbeams; by degrees he induced her to run about and climb among the rocks, in one word, to enjoy the free, fresh, youthful life, of which her days passed hitherto in the stillness of a convent, had given her no idea. As now with the rosy hue of health and gladness upon her cheeks, beautiful and light as a nymph, she floated about in the charming scenery full of fragrance and spring, and often turned her angelic countenance beaming with grateful devotion towards him, who was the cause of her life’s enjoyment, then—then the Cornet felt something wonderful in his heart; a warmth—a delight—an altogether something which had been to him hitherto a totally unknown feeling.

The Baroness seemed to contemplate the two young friends as two children, whose sport she allowed, because they still brought all their gaiety, all their flowers, as a sacrifice to her. The Cornet possessed the good faculty of keep-

ing people in good humour with themselves, and therefore with others.

After all, however, he was most useful to Hermina in the moments when the so often recurring unpleasant domestic scenes drew from her bitter tears, which she for the most part went to conceal in the kitchen. There he followed her, consoled her with brotherly tenderness, or endeavoured by conversation, or interesting stories, to lead her thoughts to pleasanter subjects.

On one of these occasions Hermina was needed and called for. She was not instantly found, and this occasioned severe reproaches from her stepfather. The Cornet took up these as a glove thrown to him, and the manner in which he replied to the challenge, obtained for Hermina greater freedom. He might now frequently go out alone with her. Her education in the higher branches of knowledge had been neglected. He was her teacher, especially in Swedish history, he was to her as a brother. She soon gave to him too the sweet name; and as they one day had been studying together the Swedish grammar, they came to the decision that *thou* was incomparably more beautiful than *you*, and that they must use it to each other.

Hermina again was for Cornet Carl, one cannot exactly say, an instructress, nor precisely a sister; but she was so unobservedly the light of his eyes, the gladness of his life, she was his——. It is high time to inform my reader, and especially my young lady reader, how it was with Cornet Carl. He was—in love.

That indeed nobody would have guessed. He himself neither believed, nor suspected, nor guessed it before

THE THIRD SUNBEAM.

As he walked one evening, towards sunset, on the shore of the mirror-calm lake, Hermina leaned upon his arm. She was silent and pale. Pale with that paleness which shows that the heart is joyless; that she was resigned, but that she suffered.

A scene deeply agitating to her gentle spirit had just occurred between her parents. Cornet Carl had borne her away from them almost by force, and now endeavoured, but

without success, to divert and enliven her dejected mind. After they had walked for some time, they seated themselves under the birch-trees, beside a mossy wall of rock, and observed silently the dying purple, which painted itself in the mirror of the water, and upon the woody heights of the opposite shore.

It was then that Hermina first turned a tear-moistened eye to Cornet Carl, and said, "Thou art very good, my brother." She wished to say more, but her voice trembled; she paused, seemed to struggle with her emotions, and continued as she half turned from him her countenance: "Thou remainest here on my account, out of kindness to me, and thou hast for my sake borne many disagreeable and heavy hours, and—thou couldst nevertheless be so happy; thou hast indeed a father, a mother so good, so excellent—sisters whom thou lovest so much,—they must miss thee—return to them—and remain with them—be happy—never come back hither!"

The Cornet sate silently and looked on the lake, and as if in a mirror of the soul, he looked at the same time into his own heart.

"Why shouldst thou continue to come hither?" began Hermina again, with a persuasive expression in her sweet, gentle voice. "Thou givest thyself a deal of trouble, a deal of vexation, and yet thou canst not change my fate. My father has to-day spoken bitter, threatening words to thee—ah, leave us! Why shouldst thou stay? Be not uneasy for me, Carl! God will strengthen and help me!"

"Hermina!" said Cornet Carl, "I cannot leave thee—but it is as much for my sake as for thine."

Hermina turned to him her countenance with an inquiring look, whilst large tears slowly rolled down her cheeks.

"Because—because," continued the Cornet, deeply excited,—“That, Hermina—because I love thee beyond all description—because I have no happiness in the world, if I do not see thee, am not with thee.”

Hermina's angelic countenance beamed with astonishment and inward gladness.

"There is then somebody who loves me—and that is thou, my brother! How good God is to me!" and she extended to the Cornet her hand.

"Dost thou also love me?" asked he, with a secret trembling, and held the small white hand in his.

"How could it be otherwise!" replied Hermina. "I have been indeed, for the first time in my life, happy since I knew thee. Thou art so excellent, so good. Thou art the first person who has loved Hermina."

"And the first whom Hermina has loved?" asked the Cornet not very stout-heartedly.

"Yes, certainly! except my mamma."*

An inward feeling of felicity overcame the two young lovers; and as if Love himself had sunk down upon the heathy turf beside them in a rosy cloud, there floated around them, at that moment, a delight, so sweet, so enchanting (certainly Olympus had not more beautiful ambrosia), that Cornet Carl, amid the delight of his soul, sprang up and exclaimed, "This is the Linnæa! My life's flower is found!" It grew really in long leafy trails down the mossy rocks. Soon was a wreath woven for Hermina. Who can describe the scene of pure and inward happiness, of innocent joy which followed? Hermina was pale no longer—the suggestion was not again thrown out that Cornet Carl should return to his family. Hermina was indeed *his*. He was Hermina's. They understood each other, they were happy. All was become good,—they should always be together. *Nobody* could divide them more—they belonged to each other, on earth—in heaven.

Nature seemed to sympathise with the young happy pair, mild and full of love, she enclosed them like a tender mother in her caressing arms.

Who would not willingly give ten heavy years of autumn for one moment of spring and love?

* I know perfectly well what a heap of Romance-gold I at this moment push from me. I see plainly how this little crumb of a novel might have been better, might have been more interestingly carried out, conducted with more animation; how both the coming in and the going out of this piece might have made my book go off splendidly. But this would have required more words; ergo, more lines; ergo, more paper; and my publisher is so horrified lest my book should be too big, and cannot be sold for a rixdollar banco, that I see myself compelled to crush together my soul and my ideas, that I may get my book into the shops within the stipulated price. My publisher fancies that the Swedish public will not lay out very much in such every-day things. I think that he is right, that they are right, and that I am right, to write accordingly.

THE FOURTH SUNBEAM

—shines over the Cornet's wrath so grimly.

One warm pure day the Cornet arrived at the house in the wood, heated, wearied, longing, pining, thirsting to cast a kindly glance on his beloved, to receive a refreshing draught from her hand. Scarcely had he reached the house when he heard the sound of her harp. He hastened up, and beheld Hermina more lovely, and more elegantly dressed than ever, sitting with the harp in her lily-white arms, and beside her, —O horror, O lightning, and thunder, and death! work of the nether-regions, invention of hell! beside her sate—not Cerberus the spectre, with three heads; no, worse!—not Polyphemus with one eye; no, worse, worse!—not the Evil one,—no, worse, worse, worse, far! Ah, it was not “The Beast” which sate beside “The Beauty;” no, it was a young man, handsome as a statue, another Prince Azor.

The handsome, proud, calm, cool, refined, and ornate Genserik G—— observed with astonishment the heated, dusty, and more than that, as he seemed, the highly confounded Cornet H——. Soon, however, he elevated his Apollo-figure, advanced, with animation, full of grace towards the new comer, extended to him his hand with friendly condescension, rejoiced to see him in the country, and reminded him of the last time they had met in Stockholm. The Cornet seemed not at all to rejoice, and scarcely uttered one civil word on the subject. Genserik went again to Hermina, and asked her to sing. The Cornet went up to her under some pretence, and whispered to her, “Do not sing.”

With commanding voice and look, the Baroness desired her daughter to sing. Hermina sung, but with a trembling voice. The Cornet seated himself in a window, and wiped the perspiration from his brow with his pocket-handkerchief. During the whole time that Genserik's visit lasted, he scarcely spoke three words; in part, because nobody talked to him; in part, because the young G—— talked incessantly himself. And he talked so well, had such select and polite terms in his conversation; told a story with so much interest, —he had so much knowledge and insight into things, that it was a real pleasure to listen (horror to the Cornet). Besides

this, he had a consciousness of his own worth, which raised it all the more in the opinion of others.

“I am—I have—I do—I consent—I think—I wish—I will—I have said,” was the theme around which and to which his thoughts and words always played rondo, at all times returned. Summa: that *I* became by degrees so great, so important, swelled so greatly, that Cornet Carl saw *his I*, as it were, melt away or crushed down. He felt himself almost stifled in that oppressive atmosphere, and was obliged to seek for breath in the fresh air. He walked up and down in the orchard, amid desperate thoughts.

“What bad-weathered wind, surely coming from the sand-desert of Zahara, had blown hither the young Law-commissioner, the fatal Genserik G——? The Baroness paid him extraordinary compliments. What does that mean? He is rich, he is handsome, accomplished; he is Law-commissioner, he is—ah, good heavens! what is he not? He showed evidently his admiration of the lovely Hermina—in particular (it is enough to make one mad) of her singing.

“And Hermina! why did she sing when *I* asked her not to do so? Why did she let compliments be paid to her by a strange fellow—a Law-commissioner into the bargain? Why did she give to her only friend hardly a friendly look? Why did she not take one single step to obtain for him—so much as a glass of water; but let him stand there and wipe his forehead and be thirsty, and be plagued and tormented both body and soul?”

Nobody replied to the questions of the unlucky lover. The heaven was cloudy about his head, and his feet got entangled in the trodden-down rows of peas. Suddenly he heard the trampling of horse's hoofs. It sounded to the Cornet like the kettle-drums of gladness. Genserik rode away, and the Cornet returned hastily to the house, to receive an explanation and satisfaction. He received neither. The Baroness met him coldly and repulsively. Her severe and watchful eyes rested upon Hermina, who sate and sewed, without venturing to look up. It was in this moment of mutual constraint and displeasure that the Cornet was surprised by the visit of his family. How it then went on, the reader knows.

A time of grief followed for the Cornet. He could no longer go to the house of his beloved without finding Genserik

there before him. His rival was openly favoured by Baron K—— and the Baroness. The Cornet was treated by them with more and more indifference. Hermina alone was gentle and kind; but dejected, silent, reserved, and avoided his questions.

In order the better to watch and observe the movements within the Wood-family, the Cornet determined to undertake a so-called journey on foot; which consisted in this, that he quartered himself in a hay-barn as near as possible to Hermina's place of residence; here he slept at night, and during the day wandered around Hermina's dwelling like a bee around flowers.

One may be happy in such a barn—yes, lying upon straw or hay, may fancy oneself in heaven! But if the thorns of grief stick in the heart, then it is certain that the barn and its bed of thistles add pain to torment. The Cornet made a memorandum on this subject.

A great change, by degrees, now took place in the Wood-house. There was abundance of eatables, wines, and many articles of luxury; there was an increase of several servants. Baron K—— was in brilliant good-humour; the Baroness more majestic and proud. The Cornet all the more superfluous and overlooked. Genserik G—— grew over his head. The greatest antipathy sprung up between the two young men; but the Cornet, angry, bitter, and caustic, appeared to disadvantage beside the uniformly cheerful, always coldly polite, and calm Genserik. He felt this, read it in all countenances, and became thereby the more embarrassed. He played what is called a “miserable fiddle;” and that we may no longer weary the ears of the fine-feeling reader with it, we will look about us in the

FIFTH SUNBEAM.

More dissatisfied than usual with Hermina, her clouded friendliness, her reserved manners, with himself, with the whole world, Cornet Carl walked one evening, full of thought, up and down in the sighing pine-wood. When he reached the spring where he had first seen Hermina, he stood with troubled feelings, observing in its clear mirror his sunburnt, dissatisfied looks, his face so little handsome, com-

paring it, in thought, with Genserik's handsome, bright, and circumspect appearance. Suddenly then he saw in the well a face looking down beside his own. It was beautiful as an angel—it was Hermina. A shiver of delight thrilled through the Cornet, but was quickly stifled by a bitter feeling.

“Hermina,” said he, “it was certainly Genserik thou expected to meet.”

Hermina stood silent a moment, then laid her hand gently upon his arm, and only said, “Carl! have we ceased to understand each other?”

He looked at her, and her gentle, loving, but tearful eyes met his.

Lovers! if the silken skein of your love and your happiness has become entangled, and you wish to strengthen it, do not talk. Look at one another!

Cornet Carl felt all at once as if a veil fell from his eyes—the mist vanished from his soul. All, at once, was clear to him; and so heavenly clear. The young lovers stood silent for a long time, and drank light, and peace, and felicity, from their mutually bright beaming eyes.

As there was no longer any spark of uneasiness remaining in their souls, the lovers began to make explanations and declarations.

“Is it not thou,” said Hermina, among other things—“is it not thou who first loved me; who made me feel that there was a pleasure in living? And even if thou hadst not done so, how canst thou think that I could place a cold egotist like G—— beside thee?”

“But he is so confoundedly handsome!” said the Cornet, laughing, and yet half confused.

“Is he? That I have not remarked. He does not please me. I know one who pleases me—one whose face it does me good to see—one whom I think handsome. Wilt thou see his portrait?”

She led him to the spring. The Cornet saw there with satisfaction his sunburnt countenance beaming with joy.

“But thy parents favour Genserik——”

“And I favour thee.”

“He loves thee.”

“And I love thee.”

“Hermina!”

“Carl!”

When a person has left this earthly life, to go to a better in heaven, people say, full of confidence, “Peace be with him!” And then they turn to think about other things.

Even so when two lovers turn from the valley of care of this life, and enter the bright heavenly kingdom of reconciliation, one may say, “Peace be with them!” and think upon other subjects.

Yet we will, as the last “God’s peace be with it,” cast now a

SIXTH SUNBEAM.

And this smiles over the delight which beams upon Cornet Carl during several happy days. He was sure of Hermina; and her silence, her reserve, her politeness towards Gensarik, his multiplied visits, his *I*, his lover-politeness — Baron K—— and his wife’s coldness towards him (Cornet Carl) — nothing more disturbed him. The barn afforded him a heavenly bed. The spring in nature mirrored the spring in his soul. The woods, flowers, waves, winds, birds, all sang to him, and for him. “Gladness! gladness!” Gladness? — Ah, Rinaldo, Rinaldo! Hark! The trumpet’s clang calls thee from Armida, and thou must resign gladness.

The trumpet’s sound! Not from the fields of Palestine — not from that promised land — but from Ladugårdsland; or rather from the Ladugårdsgård. All as one! Now, Rinaldo, Cornet Carl, thou must leave her who is more virtuous, more discreet, therefore more beautiful than Armida. Thou must tear thyself from her enchanted palace, the little grey house. Thus wills that unmovable General-in-chief of all life-regiments, *Fate*, who pays so little regard to the demands of the heart.

The trumpets sound, duty calls — to the camp, to the camp; and then,

THE SEVENTH SUNBEAM

is extinguished in the lovers’ parting tears.

In order to spare our own, we command our thoughts, turn to the right, march! again to Thorsborg. There we shall go, with old acquaintance, about new business, as if

TO DIG THROUGH THE EARTH, ETC.

ONE evening, as we were all assembled around the sick-bed of the blind girl, Professor L—— read aloud a translation of Herder's "Ideas." The subject was the development of mankind in another world; the explanatory hints, as regards his transformation, which are given to us on earth, by the changes which we remark in the kingdom of nature, and which are all a gradual advance towards perfection.

Professor L—— closed with this remark on the foregoing: "The flower seems to us at first as a vegetating seed, then as a sprout; this puts forth the bud; and now the flower first unfolds itself. Similar unfoldings and changes are shown to us by other existences, among which the butterfly is a well-known symbol of human transformation. See there crawls the ugly, coarse, greedy caterpillar; his hour comes, and a feebleness of death comes over him; he fixes himself firmly; he swaddles himself up, and spins here at his own shroud, as if in fact the organs of his new existence were within himself. Now the rings work, now the powers of the new organisation operate. The change goes on slowly at the beginning, and seems destructive; the ten feet remain in the dried-up skin, and the new being is now unshapely in all its limbs. By degrees these form themselves and come in order, but the existence awakes not before this change is perfected; it now presses towards the light, and the last development quickly takes place. A few minutes only, and the tender wings become five times greater than they were within the covering of death. They are gifted with elastic power, and with the splendour of all beams which can be found beneath the sun. Its whole nature is changed: instead of the coarse leaves upon which it earlier fed itself, it enjoys now the nectar-dew from the golden cups of the flowers. Who, in the form of the caterpillar, could have divined that of the existing butterfly? Who would recognise in it the same being, if experience had not shown it to us? And both these existences are only periods of life of one and the same being, upon one and the same earth. What beautiful development must lie in the bosom of nature, where the organic

sphere is wider and greater, and where the periods of life which it unfolds embrace more than a world.

"And thus nature shows to us also, in this analogy of existence, that is, of progressively perfecting existence, wherefore she weaves into her realm of shapes the slumber of death. It is a beneficial stupor, which enwraps a being, and within which the organic powers strive after new development. The being itself, with its greater or less degree of consciousness, is not strong enough to see and direct its combats. Thus it slumbers and awakens first, when it stands forth perfected. The slumber of death is also as it were a kind, gentle alleviation; it is a composing opiate, under which operating nature collects its powers, and the feeble invalid is refreshed."

Here L—— ceased. A deep and pleasant emotion had overcome us all. We sate silent, with looks riveted upon the poor invalid, down whose cheeks large tears gently rolled, whilst low, lamenting tones came from her lips. Her Honour embraced her with tenderness. The Colonel laid his hands as it were in blessing upon her head. A deep, sonorous, continued snoring, drew, at this moment, all our regards upon Lieutenant Arvid, who was sleeping comfortably in a corner of the sofa, with mouth open, and nose turned up in the air. This trumpet tone was a signal of revolt for Julie, who with glowing cheeks vanished from the room. After a moment I went to seek for her, and found her standing upon the steps before the house, leaning with crossed arms upon the iron balustrades, and looking fixedly upon the bright evening heavens, in which pale stars began to appear. "Julie!" said I, laying my arm around her waist.

"Ah, Beata!" sighed Julie, "I am unhappy—I am very unhappy! Must I remain so for my whole life?"

Before I could reply, Lieutenant Arvid came out on the steps, and exclaimed with a yawn, "What the deuce are you doing here, Julie? Standing and getting cold—getting cold in the head and chest. Come in again, dearest. I fancy, too, that they have begun to bring in supper. Come, then!"

"Arvid," said Julie, "come here to me for a moment;" and she took his hand kindly, and said with animation, "See how beautiful everything is, this evening; let us go into the

park. There, you know, where we once agreed to—I want to talk with you there, to beg something from you——”

“We can just as well talk with one another in the room——”

“Yes—but it is so lovely this evening. Look around you! Listen to the bird, how sweetly it twitters! Do you hear the wood-horn yonder? Look there, too, where the sun has set—what soft crimson—ah, it is a lovely evening!”

“*Charmant*, my angel,” replied Lieutenant Arvid, with a suppressed yawn; “but—I am outrageously hungry, and I noticed a delicious smell of chops as I passed the kitchen. I long to meet with them again, on the table. Besides, a cursed mist is rising. Come, my angel!”

“Arvid!” said Julie, drawing back her hand, “we have such dissimilar inclinations—such different tastes. I see——”

“Don’t you like chops?”

“God bless you, with your chops—I do not speak of them, but of our inclinations, our feelings—they do not accord——”

“Yes; that I can’t help.”

“No; but I fear that we are not fitted for each other—that we shall be unhappy——”

“Ah, thou dear one! that may be. One should not meet trouble half way. That takes away one’s appetite. Come, let us eat our supper in peace. Come, my little wife——”

“But I will not—and I am not your wife,” said Julie, as she turned herself from him; “and,” added she, a little lower, “will not be your bride any longer.”

“Will not?” said Arvid, calmly. “Yes, but you see there are some difficulties in giving that up. You have my ring, and I have yours—besides, I am not very much afraid; girls have their caprices. Nay, nay, let it be till morning. Adieu, Julie! I go to have some chops; do you swallow down your caprices.” And he vanished in the dining-room.

Julie took my arm and went down into the orchard, weeping violently. I walked silently beside her, waiting for her to open her heart with some complaint against her bridegroom. But she was silent, pressed my hand, and continued to weep.

As we turned into a side alley, a figure wrapped in a cloak

came slowly towards us. Professor L——'s voice proceeded from this, and began kindly joking Julie on her romantic taste for evening walks. When he approached us, he saw her tearful eyes, and became suddenly silent and grave.

"Professor L——," said Julie, half merrily, and with a voice half choked with weeping, "tell me, what must a person do, when he sees that he has begun a very foolish business and cannot go on with it?"

"Then," said Professor L——, "wisdom must bear the consequences of folly."

"And one should be unhappy for one's whole life?"

"Unhappy one should not be—but better and more prudent one should be, and should make all past errors steps by which to ascend nearer to perfection."

"That sounds beautiful, most especially edifying—and in the mean time one should grow weary of wisdom and perfection for a whole life—and find every day insufferable."

"Only a very weak person," said Professor L——, mildly, "can so sink under the weariness and anxiety of life. The most gloomy and joyless position in life has its points of light, if one will but see them. In every care and trouble we may most surely find within ourselves the springs of consolation. If our surrounding circumstances disturb or vex us, let us seek for some plan of freedom and an inward rich life within ourselves. Then may we say with Hamlet, 'Oh, I could let myself be enclosed within a nutshell, and fancy myself lord of an immeasurable world!' To become acquainted with this world which lives within us, to regulate it, to bring it into clearness and progressive development, is an enjoyment which no position in life can deprive us of, and an enjoyment which we must soon acknowledge as sufficient to make us love even the coldest earthly life. To learn to think, is to learn to live and enjoy."

"But," sighed Julie, "how can one learn to think with a——"

"With a man who only thinks about chops?" ended I in spirit.

"Good books," continued L——, "are gentle comforters, guides, and friends. With their help one can, if one earnestly wishes it, not go wrong in bringing one's inward life into equipoise and consistency." He was silent for a moment,

and added with warmth and emotion, "How much have I not to thank my books for!"

"You have been unhappy?" said Julie, with heartfelt sympathy.

"I have lost everything which I loved most tenderly on earth—and that not merely through death. This trial has followed me since my earliest years. Everything upon which I warmly fixed my heart has been torn from me. Many a bitter moment before I was able to bow myself submissively to the will of the Eternal God, and yet——"

"Oh that one could comfort you," exclaimed Julie, with child-like fervent devotion.

"I have," continued L——, "sought to strengthen my heart, to preserve it from suffering so bitterly. I have struggled long with its sensitiveness—I am no longer young—and yet (this he said with a sorrowful smile) I shall have perhaps soon to go to my books to find consolation."

"I wish I was a book!" said Julie, with tears in her eyes.

Professor L—— looked to her with fatherly—no, not exactly fatherly, but nevertheless indescribable tenderness.

"Good, amiable girl!" said he in his beautiful, harmonious voice; and continued after a moment, more calmly, "It is weakness to complain. We find strength to endure, in prayers, and in the fulfilment of our duties. Let us obtain our strength from these fountains."

He extended his hand to Julie, who gave hers weeping.

At this moment we reached a ditch, from which three little black figures, which seemed to ascend up from the earth, met our astonished eyes. And scarcely less astonished were we as we recognised the little Dumplings and a playfellow with them, standing up to the middle in a deep ditch, and sunk in deep deliberation. To our repeated questions regarding all this, succeeded on their part, first silence, then some confused sounds, at last the discovery and the rather dim explanation of their great secret. They had merely undertaken to dig through the earth, and to give their family, and in particular the Colonel, a great surprise thereby.

That which now arrested their progress was certainly not the difficulty of the undertaking, bah! but a deep thought, which arose in the brain of the little Claes, that when they had got through the earth they then should probably fall

through it, and then where should they come to?—that—would Professor L—— be so good now as to tell them that?

We now all laughed together.

Professor L—— deferred his explanation to the morrow, and, joking kindly, sent the pigmies with their giant-schemes home. A messenger came at that moment after them and us, to say that supper waited for us. The little triumvirate set off at a short gallop. We followed more slowly after, but now were surprised by Lieutenant Arvid's cursed mist, which stood like a wall between the orchard and the castle court. We now observed, for the first time, that Julie was without a shawl. I was not much better provided for. L—— took off his cloak, and insisted on wrapping it round Julie. She would not at all listen to it, because L——'s health was not the strongest. They would have stood till now contending and protesting, if I had not come between with a compromising project, and proposed that they both should make use of the very wide cloak. It was adopted; and Julie's delicate zephyr-like form vanished in a corner of the cloak, which she laughingly wrapped around her. And the train went forward through the night and mist.

That was, however, a little crazily done, thought I afterwards. The late Madame Genlis and M. Lafontaine no less, in their romance-world, never would have let two lovers come under a cloak without making use of such an excellent opportunity for a declaration of love, and I should really wonder if Mrs. Nature did not this time open a way, let some sigh, some word——

I listened attentively as I followed the inhabitants of the cloak, but—they were silent—no word, no sound. Yes, now!—What was it? Julie sneezed. Now L—— said, indeed, "God help!" and this may help them to something—no, he said nothing.

We leave the orchard, we go across the court. Will nobody speak then? Now!—no. We mount the steps, we enter the door; now then!—no! The cloak falls from Julie's shoulder; she thanks and curtsseys, L—— bows.

As we entered the room, Lieutenant Arvid sate and ate chops. They had waited a long time for us. For our excuse I related the contention about the cloak.

During the whole of supper, her Honour shook her head at

Julie to reprove her for so great, unheard-of imprudence as to go out so late without a shawl.

When Lieutenant Arvid perceived the eyes of his bride which had been weeping, he seemed very much confounded, but probably he thought, "it will all be right when she has eaten and slept;" for he made no haste over his supper, and afterwards sought no opportunity of conversing with his bride, and went to bed at his usual time, and with his usual calmness.

But Julie's uneasiness did not leave her; on the contrary, it seemed to increase. In vain Arvid prayed her to take "a little nap," and to consider him as a "cushion." She seemed no longer to find repose upon it. In vain his father came, old General P——, with his magnificent equipage, and besought his little daughter-in-law elect to drive out with "the Swans"—it helped nothing. There daily occurred between the betrothed many little quarrels, which assumed, spite of Arvid's unexampled phlegm, more and more of a serious character. Her Honour, who now became observant of this, was at first quite uneasy, and always held herself prepared to knit together again the broken thread of unity with some good-humoured jest, or some conciliatory word. It succeeded, to be sure, still; but—every day became anew entangled.

Thus went on time. Cornet Carl set off at the breaking up of the camp to Roslagen. From this place he wrote the most despairing letters on account of dust and heat, and vexation, and ennui, and such like. About botany he said not a word.

During the whole of the summer Elisabeth's condition remained the same, and her Honour continued to consider the milk diet necessary for my chest and my melancholy.

The Parcæ spun the life's thread of the rest of the family of common flax, mixed with a little hemp, but still more silk, till the end of the month of August—when they lifted the shears. Let us see—

WHY?

AFTER a heavy and sultry day, a mass of storm-clouds collected themselves together, and covered the whole heaven at

sunset. A sort of silence of death spread itself over the whole region. One heard no sound from speedily home-going herds, no bird twittered ; the leaf of the aspen moved not ; even the swarms of gnats ventured upon no hurrah, as usual at the going down of day ; the whole of nature stood as if in a painful expectation of something mysterious and uncommon occurring.

Later in the evening the fearfully beautiful scene began.

Pale lightning illumined every minute the whole region, which in the intervals was wrapped in an almost night-like darkness ; and by the lightning-flashes was shown how masses of clouds assumed ever darker hues, and in threatening shapes congregated together above the castle. Now and then a rapid tempest passed through the air, to which again succeeded a dead calm. With a dull but strongly increasing noise the thunder-chariots were heard rolling forth from many sides.

Her Honour hastened from stove to stove, from window to window, to see that all were well secured. Julie and Helena stood with their father in a window, and drew closer to him at every fresh flash, every fresh thunder-peal.

I went to the blind girl. She sate upon her bed in a stooping, bent position, expressive of the utmost weariness of life, and sung with a low and melancholy voice :

It is night, it is night !
My eyes are dark, on my heart is blight,
For repose it longeth.

Give me rest, give me rest,
And room in the house, by the earth-worm possess'd,
Oh pallid death's angel !

Oh let me sleep low,
Ah ! I am so weary of watching and woe,
So weary of living !

Here the arms fell, and her head, in weariness of life, sank down on the cushions. She was silent a moment ; I saw her smile mournfully, and then begin again to sing, but in a clearer voice and more cheerful tone :

When the morning dawns clear,
And the song of ascension my grave draweth near,
Which calls to existence—

Shall I see thy day,
King of Light, and from earth's sordid clay
Raise up my forehead ?

Here her tears began to flow ; and changing her tone, she sang, weeping and in broken stanzas—

O mother, O mother !
Be my defender,
Clasp thou thy daughter,
The guilty, repentant !
Teach her what prayer is,
Teach her what hope is !
* * *

Give to her tenderness,
Give to her quietness !

O mother, O mother !
Warmly embrace me,
Clasp to thy bosom,
So tender, so loving !
Let me experience
How in affection,
Bosom to bosom,
Throbs so divinely !

Ah, ne'er have I known this,
On earth whilst abiding !
* * *

Lonely I wander,
Lonely, love truly ;
Lonely I suffer,
Bitterly, bitterly !
* * *

And even in dying,
Still I love lonely !

O mother, O mother !
Take me, oh take me
Hence from the cold world,
Hence from its sorrows !
* * *

Glittering spark of light,
From the dust call me !
Lift me from darkness,
Raise me to splendour !

A violent thunder-clap, which echoed through the whole castle, interrupted her song ; to this succeeded others, even more rapidly and more violently. A wild storm began to rage at the same time.

“Is anybody here ?” asked the Blind. I went up to her. She said, “I heard music, which does me good. Lead me to the window.”

When she came there, she crossed her arms on her breast, and turned her face to heaven. The lightning flashes passed over the lovely pale face, whilst the terrific claps of thunder seemed as if they would strike down the being which, with a

kind of defying gladness, raised a calm brow towards the spirit of destruction.

By degrees, violent feelings seemed to arise in Elisabeth, and the combat in nature found an echo in her soul. Suddenly she exclaimed, "I see something! A fiery hand, with burning fingers, passes over my eyes!"

She stood a moment, as if in eager expectation, and then said, with a kind of quiet rapture, "How glorious, how glorious, the singing up there among the clouds! Sister-harmonies, do you call my heart? Here, in my breast, is the first voice—there, now sounds the second. Now there is unity—now is there life and gladness! Fire of heaven! Maternal-breast! clasp me in a burning embrace! Mother, mother! is it thy voice which I hear—thy hand which I saw?—which I see—I see now again? Beckonest thou me? Callest thou me?"

"Air!" shrieked she now wildly and commandingly; "lead me out into the free air! I will hear my mother's voice—I will fly to her breast and be warm again. Without are wings of fire, they will sustain me. There is a chariot—hear now its rolling! it will take me. Hence, hence! dost thou not see hands? they beckon. Hear voices? they call—ha! dost thou hear?"

I embraced her with tenderness, and besought her to remain still. She interrupted me, as she solemnly said, "God may refuse to hear thy last prayer, if thou refuse mine. He will bless thee, if thou comply with mine. Lead me, lead me out into the open air! It will be the last time that I shall ask anything from thee. Thou knowest not how all my weal and woe depends upon this moment. Lead me into my kingdom—the kingdom of the storm—there, there only shall I experience peace, Beata, good Beata! See, I am quiet and collected, I am not mad. Hear me, hear my prayer! I have lain in fetters all my life—let me, only for one moment be free, and all my many bleeding wounds will be healed."

I had not courage to withstand this voice, these words. I led her down upon the terrace, which extends on the wall of rock a considerable way outside the castle. The young girl who was Elisabeth's maid, from fear of the storm, would not accompany us.

I soon repented of my compliance. Scarcely were we come out into the wild uproar of nature, than Elisabeth tore

herself loose from me, sprang forward a few paces, and then standing still, raised a loud cry, full of wild, insane delight.

It was a scene of terrific beauty. The lightnings crossed around, with red tongues, the whole region; the storm swept around us, and now rolling, now whizzing thunder-claps circled over our heads. Like the spirit of the tempest, the Blind stood upon the rocks with wild, sorrowful gestures. Then she laughed and clapped her hands together in insane gladness, then turned herself round about with extended arms, whilst she sung with a strong and clear voice :

Lightning and flashing,
Flaming waves dashing,
From the world's sea of fire!
Wild tempests quaking,
And riven chains breaking
The grave's silence dire!

Thunders—and all ye
Mighty, I call ye
From the world's sullen breast,
Behold, in a woman
Your queen, who doth summon
You, hear my behest!

Lightning, forth wing thou,
Sing thou, oh sing thou,
Hail Freedom to thee!

* * * * *
The victor's song rings now,
Life findeth wings now;

I am the free!

Again she laughed wildly, and exclaimed, "How glorious, how glorious! how splendid! How glad I am, glad! glad! Now is my day of rule come!—A crown—a crown of fire, will descend from the dark clouds and be placed upon my head. My day is at hand, my time is come!"

At this moment, to my indescribable comfort, the Colonel stood at the side of the unhappy one.

"You must," said he, "return to your room."

With a hasty movement, Elisabeth withdrew her hand from his, and instead, as before, of submissively complying with his wishes, she stood now before him proudly and insolently, with the look of a Medea, and repeated, "My hour is come! I am free! *Must*? Who dares to say that word to me, here in this place? Stand I not in my own realm? Has not my mother fetched me in her arms? Seest thou not how her arms of fire embrace me, and repel thee?"

The Colonel, who dreaded an increasing outbreak of her insanity, wished to take her in his arms, to carry her again to the castle, when Elisabeth hastily, with infinite tenderness, laid her arms around his neck, and said to him, "So, if I clasp thee in my arms, and thou me in thine, then will my mother take us up both in her bosom of fire. What bright and heavenly bliss! This is my day—my hour is come! I am free, and thou art taken captive. I defy thee—I defy thee ever again to become free!"

Was it the word *defy* which woke the *defiance* of the man, or was it some other feeling, but the Colonel suddenly released himself from Elisabeth's arms, and stood still at a few paces distance from her.

"Yes, I defy—I defy thee!" continued she. "Thou hast fettered my limbs, thou hast bound my tongue; and yet I now stand before thee powerful and strong, and like lightning, will launch against thee the fearful words. 'I love thee! I love thee!' Thou canst no longer forbid them to me, thy wrath is powerless. The thunder is with me—the tempest is with me! Soon shall I be with them above, for ever. Like a cloud upon thy heaven shall I follow thee all thy life; like a pale ghost shall I hover above thy head; and, when all is silent around thee, thou shalt hear my voice exclaiming—'I love thee! I love thee!'"

A strange and deep emotion seemed to have overcome the Colonel; he stood immovable, with his arms folded, but dark fire flashed from his eyes.

Elisabeth continued with a quiet enthusiasm, "Oh, how deeply have I loved thee! So deeply, so warmly no mortal ever loved! Heaven, which thunders above my head—earth, which soon will open my grave—you, take I for eternal witnesses! Hear my word! Understand thou, thou, my life's beloved torment, noble, lofty object of all my thoughts—of my love, of my hatred, yes, my hatred—hear how it sounds—'I love thee!'—with my being's most inward, most holy life have I loved thee;—deep as the sea, but pure as heaven was my feeling. Thou hast not understood it—nobody on earth could understand it—my mother knew it—and *He* who is above us all. If we had lived in a world where words and deeds could be as innocent as feelings and thoughts—oh then, like a bright, warm flame might I have enclosed and

shone around thy existence—have penetrated thee with felicity—have burned a pure sacrificial flame for thee alone. Such was my love. But thou didst not understand it—thou didst not love me—and thou repulsed me, and thou forsook me—and I became guilty—but loved nevertheless—and love now—and always, and eternally—and—*alone!*”

“Alone!” exclaimed the Colonel, whilst a powerful feeling seemed to transport him out of himself.

“Yes, alone,” repeated the Blind, confused and trembling, “could it be otherwise? I have sometimes suspected—but—oh, my God, my God! could it be possible? Oh say, is it possible? By the eternal happiness which thou deservest,—and which never can be mine,—by the light which thou seest, and which I never shall behold,—I conjure thee—say, say, hast thou loved me?”

A moment’s perfect silence reigned in nature. It seemed as if it would listen to the answer, which I also awaited with trembling anxiety. At length, pale, slow lightning flamed around us.

Solemnly, with a strong, almost powerful expression in his voice, the Colonel said:

“Yes!”

The Blind raised her countenance beaming with superhuman bliss, whilst the Colonel continued with violent and deep emotion:

“Yes, I have loved thee, Elisabeth, loved thee with the whole power of my heart—but God’s power in my soul was more powerful, and kept me from falling. My severity alone has saved thee and me. My love was not pure as thine. It was not the poison which thy hand gave to me, which disturbed my health—it was the combat with passion and desire—it is the care for thee. Elisabeth! Elisabeth! thou hast been infinitely dear to me,—thou art so yet—Elisabeth.”

Elisabeth heard him no longer; she sunk down as it were under the load of happiness which fell upon her; and I sprang towards her at the moment when she fell like one dying upon the earth, whilst her lips whispered with an indescribable expression of happiness, “He has loved me!”

The Colonel and I were scarcely able to carry her to her chamber. I trembled—his strength was as if paralysed. A sweat of anguish hung in drops on his brow.

Elisabeth recovered, in a short time, her consciousness; but when she re-opened her eyes, and the stream of life again rushed through her veins, she merely whispered, "He has not despised!—He has loved me!" and remained still and calm, as if she had closed her account with the world—as if she had nothing left for her to wish.

During the remaining part of the night the storm raged terrifically, but the lightnings shone now upon the countenance of the Blind, beaming with inward happiness.

From this moment, and during the few days which she yet lived, all was changed to her. All was peace and gentleness. She spoke seldom, but pressed kindly and gratefully the hands of those who approached the bed upon which she lay almost immovable. She was frequently heard to say in an under voice, "He has loved me!"

One day her Honour stood beside Elisabeth, who did not seem aware of her presence, and she repeated with indescribable delight the words so dear to her. I saw an expression of pain depicted on the mild, kind countenance of her Honour—saw her lips tremble, and some tears roll down her cheeks. She turned hastily, and went out. I followed her, for she had forgotten her bunch of keys. We went through the ante-room. The Colonel sate there, his head bowed upon his hand, as if he were reading. He had his back turned to us. Her Honour stole softly behind him, kissed his forehead, and stifled her sobs, as she went into the bedroom. The Colonel, astonished, looked after her, glanced then upon his hand wet with the tears of his wife, kissed them away, and resumed his thoughtful posture. After a moment I followed her Honour into her bed-chamber, but she was not there; her hymn-book lay open upon the sofa, and its leaves bore traces of tears. At length I found her, after I had gone about through all the rooms, in the kitchen, where she was rather scolding the cook, because she had forgotten to cut the cutlets from a breast of lamb which was frizzling over the fire; which oversight actually was unpardonable, as I already had told her twice that we should have breast of lamb for dinner, and cutlets for supper.

"One cannot trust to any one but oneself," said her Honour to me, a little piqued, as I gave to her her bunch of keys.

I now left Elisabeth neither day nor night.

With an astonishing rapidity her earthly existence seemed to speed towards its end. It seemed as if the first word of affection which she had heard, had been the signal of her afflicted soul's deliverance.

It is so with many children of the earth. They strive against the sting of affliction for many and many a year—live, suffer, and contend. The sting is broken, and they fall down powerless. Happiness reaches to them her beaker. They set their lips to the purple edge—and die!

Besides Helena and myself, Professor L—— was almost constantly with Elisabeth. In part he read aloud to her, in part he talked with us in a manner which was calculated to elevate her slumbering feelings of religion, and strengthen her faith in the dear truths which stand like bright angels by the couch of the dying.

Once he proposed to her several questions on the condition of her own mind. She replied, "I now have not strength to think clearly. I have not power to examine myself. But I feel—I have a hope—I have a presentiment of clearness!——"

"May the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee!" said Professor L——, with quiet dignity and prudence.

The next day Elisabeth besought the whole family to assemble around her. As we all, together with Professor L——, were assembled in mournful silence in her room, Elisabeth called by name those whom she wished to approach her bed—seized their hand, kissed it, as she uttered with humble devotion the word, "Forgive!" So she went through them all. No one was able to speak, and that mournful "Forgive! forgive!" was the only sound which interrupted the sad murmur of sighs.

The Colonel and his wife stood there now together. Elisabeth was silent for a moment, and breathed heavily and with difficulty. At last she said, "Will my uncle come to me?"

The Colonel went forward—she extended her arms to him—he bent himself down to her—they kissed. Oh, what a kiss! The first and the last—that of love and of death!

Not a word was spoken. Pale as one dying, and with uncertain steps, the Colonel withdrew. With trembling voice

Elisabeth said, "Lift me up out of bed, and lead me to Mrs. H——."

We did so. She showed an unusual strength, and supported by two persons, went to the other end of the room, where her Honour, who did not seem aware of her design, sate weeping.

"Assist me," said Elisabeth, "and place me upon my knees."

Her Honour rose up hastily, to prevent it being done; but, notwithstanding, Elisabeth hastily lay at her feet, kissing them, whilst she stammered forth, with convulsive sighs, "Forgive! forgive!"

She was borne almost lifeless again to her bed.

From this moment the Colonel did not again leave her.

Through the night which succeeded this day, and the day following, she lay still, but seemed to suffer physical pain. In the evening, as Professor L——, the Colonel, and I sate silently by her bed, she woke out of a still slumber, and said aloud, in a clear voice, "He has loved me! Lord, I thank thee!"

After this she sank into a kind of sleep or stupor, which continued probably an hour. Her breath, which during this time had been very rapid, became feeble by degrees. A long pause occurred—then came a sigh—then a longer interval—and then again a sigh. All at once the breath seemed to cease. It was a terrible moment. A slight spasm passed through the limbs—then a violent sigh or gasp, followed by a sadly-mournful sound—and all was still.

"She has ceased to be!" said the Colonel, with a suppressed voice, and pressed his lips upon the death-pale brow.

"She *sees* now!" said Professor L——, and raised a solemn and beaming look to heaven.

The joyous air of the summer evening played in through the open window, and the birds sang gaily without in the honeysuckle hedge. A gentle rose light, a reflection of the lately descended sun, diffused itself through the chamber, and spread an illuminating glory over the deceased.

She now lay still and free from pain! She who so long had combated and despaired—so calm, so still now! Her rich brown hair fell over the white pillow, and even down to the floor. On her lips was an extraordinary smile, full of an ex-

pression of sublime knowledge. I have seen that smile upon the lips of many who sleep the sleep of death. The angel of eternity has impressed upon them his kiss.

Peaceful moment, in which a heart which has so long throbbed with disquiet and pain, experiences rest! Peaceful moment, which reconciles every enemy to us, which draws near to us every friend, casts oblivion over every error, the beams of glory over every virtue, which opens the blind eyes and releases the bonds of the soul! Beautiful and peaceful moment, although borne upon the wings of a nocturnal angel, thou smilest towards me like the rosy hue of morning; and when I see thee advance towards another, I have many a time longed thou shouldst come for me also.

THE SKEIN GETS ENTANGLED.

ELISABETH was no more. She had been like a gloomy thunder-cloud, and darkened the bright heaven of existence which most nearly surrounded her. When she was gone, all experienced a sentiment of peace and security. Many tears were consecrated to her mournful memory; but no heart recalled her. Pitiab! Elisabeth! thou first gavest peace when thy own heart enjoyed it in the grave.

We see every day that the most insignificant, the least endowed persons, but who are kind and gentle, become more beloved in the world and more lamented than the distinguished, richly gifted, who misuse their talent; who, with all their beauty, their mind, their warmth of heart, have not made one being happy.

The Colonel alone retained for a long time a gloomy state of mind, and was more reserved than common towards his wife and children. Their tenderness and attentions, however, as well as the beneficial operation of time, by degrees dissipated this gloom, when circumstances connected with his domestic circle anew shook his rest, and agitated his naturally powerful feelings.

One day, Arvid's father, General P——, burst into the Colonel's room, full of fury. First of all, he relieved his heart by a salvo of curses and oaths; and when the Colonel coldly asked what it all meant, he stammered forth, almost beside himself, "What does it mean? What does it mean?"

Thousand d——ls! It means that your—your—your daughter is a cursed——”

“General P——!” said the Colonel, in a voice which brought the angry man quickly to himself, and who replied rather more quietly, “It—it—it—means that your daughter plays with truth and faith, that she befools—fetch me seven thousand!—that she will break off with Arvid, will return to him the betrothal ring. Fetch me seven! that Arvid is beside himself, that he will shoot himself through the head, so violent and frantic as he is; and that I shall be a miserable, childless old man!” Here a few tears rolled down the old gentleman’s cheeks, and he continued in a voice in which anger and pain contended: “She sports with my son’s peace—sports with my grey hairs. I loved her so tenderly; as a father, brother, as a father. I had set my hope of happiness in the evening of my life upon her. It will be the death of me. She says directly to my Arvid’s face that she will not have him; directly in my son’s face! Fetch me seven thousand! He will be a laughing-stock to the whole country. He will shoot himself, brother; he will shoot his brains out, I say; and I shall be a childless, miserable old man,” etc. etc.

The Colonel, who had heard all this in the most perfect silence, now rang the bell violently. I was in the next room, and went in to the Colonel, in order a little to reconnoitre, and to prepare Julie for that which awaited her.

The Colonel’s countenance betrayed anger and severity. He desired me to tell Julie to come down to him.

I found Julie in the greatest anxiety; but, from the General’s visit to her father, prepared for that which was before her.

“I know—I know,” said she, growing pale at my message, “it must come out—it cannot be helped.”

“But hast thou actually,” I asked, “broken off with thy bridegroom?”

“I have—I have probably,” answered she, troubled and full of anxiety; “I cannot now tell all—yesterday evening a word escaped me against Arvid—he was cold and scornful—I was violent, he was in a passion and rode away in anger.”

Again we heard the Colonel’s bell.

“Good heavens!” said Julie, and pressed her hands to

her heart, "now I must go—and must have courage. Ah! if it were not for his contemptuous look—tell me, Beata—did papa look very solemn?"

I could not say no; prayed her not to hurry herself—to consider well her own promise, once so solemnly given, the Colonel's strict principles regarding the sanctity of such a promise.

"Ah, I cannot—I cannot!" was all that Julie was able to say, while trembling and pale she went down stairs to the Colonel's room. When she came to the door she paused, as if to strengthen her resolve, said "I must!" and went in.

In the course of about half an hour Julie came into Helena's room, where I also was, and looked quite inconsolable. She threw herself upon the sofa, laid her head upon Helena's knee, and began sobbing loudly and violently. The good Helena sate silent, but sympathetic tears ran down her cheeks, and fell like pearls upon Julie's golden plaits of hair. When, after a little time, Julie's suffering seemed somewhat to allay itself, Helena said tenderly, as she passed her fingers between her sister's rich curls, "I have not arranged thy hair to-day, sweet Julie. Sit up a moment, and it shall soon be done."

"Ah, cut off my hair!—I will be a nun!" replied Julie; but for all that rose up, dried her eyes, let her sister arrange her hair, assisted Helena with hers, and was calmer.

So certain is it, that the little occupations of every-day life possess a wonderful power to dissipate troubles.

When we inquired what had really happened, Julie replied—"This has happened, that I am condemned for the whole remainder of my life to do penance for the thoughtlessness of one moment—and to be a wretched being—that is to say—if I submit to the sentence—but I will not—rather papa's displeasure—rather——"

"Ah, Julie, Julie!" interrupted Helena, "think well about what you say!"

"Helena, you know not what I suffer, how I have struggled with myself for a long time. You know not how clearly I see the lamentable and the miserable part of my fate, if I must be Arvid's wife. Ah! I have hitherto been as if asleep, and sleeping I gave him my hand,—now I am awake—and should not withdraw it if I saw that I gave it to a——"

“ Arvid is a good young man, Julie ! ”

“ What do you call good, Helena ? Those who merely are not bad ? Arvid (I have tried, I have proved it) seemed good, because he has not been tempted to be bad ; calm and collected, because he troubled himself about nothing but his own convenience ; reasonable, because he sees no farther than his nose extends. Ah ! he is merely a collection of negatives—why should one fear to add to his collection, and make him a present of another *no* ! Do not imagine that it will trouble him long—he does not love me—he cannot love, he has no feeling ! Ah ! he is a bit of damp wood, which my little fire would in vain strive to kindle ; the flame would by degrees vanish in smoke, and in the end quite go out.”

“ If even, sweet Julie, Arvid be not the man whom you deserve, and who would make you, as your husband, happy, why should not your fire nevertheless burn clearly ? Arvid is, indeed, not bad ; he would never become a spirit of torment to you. How many wives are there united to husbands who beyond all comparison stand far below them, yet who develop themselves as noble and excellent beings ; create happiness and prosperity around them, and enjoy happiness through the beautiful consciousness of fulfilling their duty. See our cousin, Mrs. M——, how estimable and how amiable she is ! And what a man is her husband ! Look at Emma S—— ; look at Edda R——.”

“ Yes, and look at Penelope and sisters and company—ah, Helena, these women have my high esteem, my reverence, my admiration. I would resemble them ; but one thing I know clearly—that I cannot do so. That independence in opinion and judgment, that calmness, that clearness, that certainty and perspicuity of principle, which are so necessary when in married life one would take the lead—this I have not—not at all ! I am exactly one who requires to be guided—I am a vine-branch, and need the oak for support. At this moment my understanding has developed itself—I feel a better being arising within me—a new world opening itself for me ! Would that I might wander through it on the hand of a husband whom I could love and esteem ; whose heart would reply to the purifying fire within mine ; who with the light of his clear understanding would illumine the twilight in my soul ; (behold Professor L——, thought I)—oh, how much better a being should I then be !—and

arrive at a goal which I now rather imagine than see. But with Arvid, see Helena, with Arvid—my world would be like a store-room—I myself like a bit of mouldy cheese.”

“What a comparison, dear Julie!”

“It is truer than you think. Ah, it is a mournful affair, this marrying. There are a great many with whom it has happened as it now might happen with me—they have hoisted the sail of matrimony in foolishness—have fancied they should reach the island of bliss—and have been stranded, and fixed for the whole of their lives upon a sand-bank. Like the oyster in its shell, they have crept about and sought for a little sunshine, till the merciful wave came——”

“Julie! Julie!”

“Helena! Helena! It is a sketch from every-day life; every day strengthens its truth. How many noble natures have been ruined in this way? And so will *mine* be, if I am not able in time to sail past the sand-bank.”

“Julie! I fear that this cannot be done. Papa’s principles are immovable; and among these stands foremost firm adherence to a promise. And I think that he is perfectly right. Besides, as regards the annulling of a betrothal, the taking back of a given promise of marriage, there lies in it a something so deeply wounding to female delicacy, that I consider——”

“Delicacy here, and delicacy there! I consider it quite indelicate, and in particular quite absurd, that a whole life’s happiness should be sacrificed to delicacy.”

“Could you be happy, Julie, if you lost the affection of your friends—of your father—the esteem of the world?”

“The esteem of the world—I would not give many stivers for it! but the esteem of those whom I love—ah, Helena, Beata—is it indeed possible that I could lose that? Then it certainly would be better that I condemned myself to be unhappy——”

“You shall not be unhappy, Julie,” said Helena, as with tearful eyes she clasped her sister in her arms—“you shall——”

“Of that you know nothing, Helena,” interrupted Julie, with irritable impatience; “I know that I should be so. There is a something still, besides Arvid’s unworthiness, which would make me so; it is the certainty that I have

missed my goal—the certainty that I might have had a nobler, a happier lot—that I might have lived upon earth for the happiness of a superior and excellent being. Ah, I feel it. I might, like a lark, have winged myself on high in freedom, light, and song; and now, now I shall, as I feared, crawl about on the sand-bank of life, like an oyster, dragging along with me my prison!”

By the repetition of this horrible, but no less correct comparison, a new, vehement grief overcame Julie: she threw herself again down on the sofa, and remained the whole day without eating, or being willing to hear any consolation. Her Honour, partly herself, and partly in my person, ran incessantly up and down stairs with drops and smelling-waters.

Julie was really, though not seriously, unwell, and remained two days in her chamber, during which she did not see her father. Neither Lieutenant Arvid nor the General were heard of during these days, to the great comfort of Julie.

Her Honour had always had her own little tactics, or domestic policy, whenever any misunderstanding occurred between her husband and her children;—namely, when she talked with the first, her words were always on the side of the latter; and with the latter she asserted and proved to them that the first was in the right. Her heart was, I fancy, often a deserter to the side of the weaker, because when, in certain cases, everything was obliged to yield to the iron will of the Colonel, her Honour always caressed her children with redoubled tenderness. She had now also talked with her husband in Julie’s behalf, and for the releasing her from her engagement, but found him inflexible (“Impossible!” said her Honour); and when she now saw Julie so wretched, she was imperceptibly towards him—not unfriendly—God forbid!—but, nevertheless, a little less friendly; in appearance (I’ll answer for it that it was not so in reality) somewhat less anxious about his comfort and satisfaction in a many little things. A certain unpleasantness, hitherto altogether foreign to the family, prevailed in the house for some days.

“If the mountain will not come to Mahomet—Mahomet must go to the mountain,” said the Colonel to me, one

morning, with a good-tempered smile, as he was about to go up the stairs which led to Julie's room.

At that very moment a travelling-carriage drove into the court, and Cornet Carl, with a flushed and almost bewildered countenance, sprang out and up the steps, embraced with silent fervency his parents and sisters, and besought, after this, a moment's conversation with his father.

The moment extended to an hour, when the Cornet, with a pale and disturbed countenance, came alone out of his father's room. As if unconsciously, he went through the drawing-room and dining-room into her Honour's boudoir, without seeming to be aware either of her or me, and seated himself silently with his elbows rested upon a table, and covered his eyes with his hand, as if the daylight distressed him.

Her Honour observed him with maternal anxiety; at length she rose, stroked his cheek with her hand caressingly, and said to him, "My good boy, what is amiss with thee?"

"Nothing!" answered the Cornet, with a low and suppressed voice.

"Nothing?" repeated her Honour. "Carl, thou makest me anxious—thou art so pale—thou art unhappy!"

"Yes," replied the Cornet, in the same low voice.

"My child, my son! What ails thee?"

"Everything!"

"Carl! and thou hast a mother who would give her life for thy happiness!"

"My good mother!" exclaimed the Cornet, and clasped her in his arms; "forgive me!"

"My best child! tell me what I can do for thee? Tell me what thou wantest—tell me all! It must have an outlet some way—I cannot live and see thee unhappy!"

"I must be unhappy, if I cannot obtain, or raise on bond, the sum of ten thousand rixdollars. If I do not get them to-day, Hermina is—*my* Hermina is in a few days the wife of another! Good heavens! the happiness of my whole life, and that of another, I would purchase with this beggarly money—and it is denied me! I have spoken with my father—opened to him my heart—told him all. He has this sum—I know it—and he——"

"And he has denied thee?"

“Positively, decidedly. He says that it is the inheritance of the unhappy and the needy; and for the sake of these suffering strangers he makes his own son wretched!”

With this the Cornet started up, and went with great strides up and down the room, as he exclaimed, “What low being has dared to blacken Hermina to my father—this God’s holy angel? She would deceive me! She—she loved the detested G——! He only, or his emissaries, have been able——”

Here the Cornet massacred a carriage with its accompanying horses (the equipage of the little Dumplings); and her Honour, terrified, removed from her son’s neighbourhood a vase with flowers, whilst she, attentive to his complaints, asked anxiously,—“But why? But how?”

“Do not ask me now!” said the Cornet, impatiently. “I can say only this now, that my life’s weal or woe rests upon my obtaining to-day the specified sum of money. I may become the happiest being on the earth, or the most unhappy; and not I alone——”

“Carl!” said her Honour, solemnly, “look at me! God bless thy honest eyes, my son! Yes, I know thee. Thou wilt not let me take a step, the consequences of which I may repent.”

“My mother! wouldst thou repent having effected the happiness of my life?”

“It is enough, my child. I go now to speak to thy father. Wait for me here.”

The Cornet awaited the return of his mother in a violently excited state of mind. I saw that in a moment he was in that delirium of youth which makes it appear incredible that any one can oppose their wishes or their wills. In such moments people cannot bear the word “impossibility.” They seem to themselves as if they could command the sun even, seem as if they could tear up the roots of the mountains; or, which is all the same, tear up the principles from a firm human breast.

It was a long time before her Honour returned. Julie and Helena accompanied her. She was pale; tears glittered on her eyelids, and her voice trembled as she said, “Thy father will not; he has his reasons; he thinks that he does right, and does quite certainly what is best. But, my good child, thou canst be assisted, nevertheless. Take these pearls and

jewels. They are mine—I can dispose of them—take them. In Stockholm thou wilt receive a considerable sum for them.”

“And here, and here, best Carl,” said Julie and Helena, whilst with the one hand they offered him their treasures, and threw the other affectionately around his neck; “take these also, Carl; we pray thee, take, sell all, and make thyself happy!”

A dark crimson flushed the countenance of the young man, and tears streamed down his cheeks. At that moment the Colonel entered, stood in the doorway, and riveted a keen glance upon the group which occupied the background of the room. An expression of anger, mingled with scorn, lighted up his face. “Carl!” exclaimed he, with a strong voice, “if thou art sufficiently unworthy to take advantage of the weakness of thy mother and sisters to satisfy thy blind passion, then *I* despise thee, I will not acknowledge thee as my son.”

Deeply unhappy, and now so deeply misjudged, the bitterest indignation poured its gall into the heart of the young man. He was deathly pale, his lips convulsively compressed. He stamped his foot violently, and was out of the door like lightning. A few minutes afterwards, he mounted his horse and galloped across the court.

THE CORNET! THE CORNET! THE CORNET!

“Halloa! it sounds through the wood.”

HALLOA! it sounds. The hunted fly, and the hunters follow. What is the game? An unhappy human being. And the hunters? The furies of anger, of despair, and frenzy. How they drive! An unexampled chase! The hunted fly, and the hunters follow. Halloa! halloa! They lose not the scent—they follow—they follow, through the thickest wood, over the dancing billows, over hill, over dale, with gaping jaws—will swallow their prey—it goes bound after bound—but runs wearily on its course. Halloa! halloa! it will soon be ended!

Onward! onward! the pursued spurred his snorting horse, which flew foaming over hedges and ditches. Wild tumults

raged in his soul. Wrapt in a cloud of dust, he posted over the road through gloomy and wood-overgrown tracts, whilst he sought to stupify every feeling, every thought in his soul, and listened only to the admonitory forward ! forward ! which rung in every throb of his fever-wild pulse.

The peaceful inhabitants of the cottages, which he rushed past like a storm-wind, sprang in astonishment to their door, and asked in wonder, "What horseman is that who is run away with ?"

And one of them (Stina Ander's daughter at Rörum) declared that she had seen a hound and a hare come forth ; the one out of the cottage, and the other out of the wood, and sitting, the one opposite the other with staring eyes ; saw the wild rider ; after which, quite bewildered and out of sorts, they had sprung past each other ; the hare into the cottage, the dog into the wood.

The wild rider, Cornet Carl, made no halt till he pulled up at the gates of the Wood-house, so well known to us, threw himself from his horse, and sprung up the steps. All the doors in the upper story were fastened ; all was still. He sprang down the steps. All the doors in the lower story were fastened ; all was still and dead. He sprang across the court to a little outbuilding, and pushed open a door. There, humming a psalm, and spinning flax upon a whistling wheel, sate within the cottage a little, wrinkled, old woman.

"Where are the gentlefolks ? Where is Miss Hermina ?" exclaimed the heated, almost breathless Cornet.

"Ha ?" answered the little old spinning-woman.

"Where are the gentlefolks ?" cried the Cornet, with an annihilating voice and look.

"What d'ye say ?" replied the old woman, as she poked her nose comfortably into a little snuff-box.

The Cornet stamped. (A mended cup fell down from the shelf, three crippled glasses jingled together.) "Are you stone-deaf ?" shrieked he at the highest pitch of his voice. "I ask which way the gentlefolks from here are gone ?"

"Which way ? To Thorsborg, does the gentleman mean ? Ay, then, go over the fields, and——"

"I ask," screamed the Cornet, very loudly, in despair, "where the gentlefolks are gone to from here ?"

"To Wresta ? Yes, yes—then you must go——"

"It is beyond all patience!" said the Cornet, in despair, "it is enough to drive one mad!"

"Ay, ay, indeed!" sighed the little old woman, perplexed and terrified at the appearance of the Cornet's anger, and went quickly to pick up the pieces of the broken cup.

A small piece of money upon this flew under her nose, and the stranger had vanished.

"God preserve me!—God bless!" stammered the astonished and pleased old woman.

Another door on the same floor now flew open before the powerful grasp of the Cornet's hand.

On the hearth sate, beside her pig (that is to say her child), a fat, dear mother, feeding her little bristly-haired boy with hasty-pudding.

The Cornet repeated here his questions, and received for answer—

"Yes, they are set off."

"But where? say where? Did they leave no message—no letter for me?"

"Letter? Yes; I have one that was left for the Cornet H——, and I was just thinking of setting out with it to Thorsberg, as soon as I have put a drop of gruel into the boy, poor thing—eat, boy!"

"In heaven's name give me here the letter directly—haste, go this moment, I say, after it, go——"

"Yes, yes—I'll go as soon as I have put these drops of gruel into the boy. He is hungry, poor creature—eat, boy!"

"I will feed the boy, give me the spoon—only go and fetch the letter here directly!"

At length the woman went to her chest. The Cornet stood on the hearth, took gruel out of the pot with the spoon, blew it with anxious countenance, and put it into the little fellow's open mouth. The woman tumbled the things about in her chest, sought and sought. Snuff-box and butter-pot, stockings and under-petticoats, hymn-book and bread, came one after another, and lay all about the floor—the letter not.

The Cornet tramped and stamped in painful impatience.

"Be quick there! No, is it not there? Ah!"

"Directly, directly! wait only a bit, wait—here, no, here, —no, wait a bit—wait."

Wait! One may imagine to oneself whether the Cornet was inclined now to "wait!"

But the letter was not forthcoming. The woman put by her things, and muttered between her teeth—

"It's gone—it's not to be found!"

"Not to be found!" repeated the Cornet, and poked in his impatience a spoonful of hot gruel into the throat of the boy, who set up a loud roar.

The letter was not to be found. "The boy must certainly have picked it up, have torn it in two or else have burned it;" and the dear mother, who was more concerned about her boy's trouble than the Cornet's, said angrily to the latter, "Go to Löfstaholm, there you can say good-by. The gentlefolks are gone there, and Miss Agnes was here to-day with Miss Hermina."

The Cornet left a rixdollar as a plaster for the scalded throat, and cursing half aloud the goose and the gosling, mounted Blanka again, who in the mean time had been cropping the yellow autumn-grass which grew here and there in the court.

Now to Löfstaholm. Six miles had to be got over. Blanka felt the spurs, and sprang off at a full gallop.

A river divides the road. The bridge was broken down and was under repair. There is yet another way—but that makes a bend of a mile and a half. Blanka soon snorted courageously in the waves, which washed the foam from neck and nose, and kissed the feet of the rider as he sate in his saddle.

Two travellers at some little distance began to talk.

"Do you know, mother," said the one thoughtfully to the other, "I think that it is the Neck himself, who has ridden on the black mare through the river."

"Do you know, father," said the other, "I think it is a bridegroom who rides to his beloved."

"Trust me, my old woman!"

"Trust me, my old fellow!"

And "trust me, my reader," the rider stands now on the opposite shore; and forwards, forwards speeds he again through wood and field.

Poor Blanka! when the white walls of Löfstaholm shone forth amid the green-yellow-brown trees thou wast not very

far from being knocked up, but at the sight of them the rider somewhat relaxed his speed, and when come into the court, Blanka was able to rest, and to draw breath by the side of three other riding-horses, which proved that Löfstaholm had guests at this moment.

The ironmaster and knight, Mr. D——, sate in his room and contemplated with the mien of a satisfied connoisseur a head in black chalk, done by the promising daughter Eleonora. The iron-master's lady, Mrs. Emerentia D——, whose maiden name was J——, stood beside him reading with delighted attention a poem on the pleasure of "Rural Life and Simplicity," written by her most hopeful son Lars Anders (whom the family called "the little Lord Byron"), as Cornet Carl stepped violently into the room, and after a slight apology, without troubling himself as to what people thought of him, his state of mind, and his questions, prayed to know what was known here of the hasty departure of Baron K—— and his family.

"Nothing more than this," said Ironmaster D——, and wrinkled up his brow, "that they passed by here yesterday afternoon, and that Baron K—— was pleased to come up here and say rude things to me, and to pay me, it may be, a fourth part of the sum which I have lent to him out of pure kindness, an eternity since.—A Dido,—Cornet H——, by my Eleonora——."

Mrs. D—— took up the word. "The Baroness, or what must one call her (for I have the idea that she is no more a Baroness than I am), was not pleased once to move to me from the carriage. Yes, yes, one gets beautiful thanks for all the politeness one shows to people. No, she sate as bolt upright and stiff as a princess in her carriage,—*her* carriage say I—yes, very pretty—young G——'s equipage it was, he himself sate in it like a caught bird in a cage,—and that perhaps made her so proud."

"G——'s carriage? G—— with them?" cried the Cornet, "and Hermina?"

"Sate there, and looked straight before her like a turkey-hen. Yes, I have been quite mistaken in that girl. I was quite sorry for her, and allowed my daughters to take a little trouble about her and encourage her musical talent. Therese, in particular, was actually bewitched with her.

But I soon found that I had committed an imprudence, and that neither she, nor her family, were in any respect fit society for my daughters. All kind of strange reports are in circulation respecting these high-bred gentry—they are gone off in a manner——”

A servant now came in with tobacco-pipes, which he arranged in a corner of the room. The Ironmaster D—— thought it as well to continue the conversation in French.

“Oui, c’est une vrai scandale,” said he, “une forgerie de tromperie! Un vrai frippon est la fille—je sais ça—et le plus extrêmement mauvais sujet et sa père.”

“*Son père*,” corrected Mrs. D——, “et le pire de toute chose c’est son mère. Un conduite, oh! Ecoute, cher Cornet, dans Italie, le mère et le fille et la père——”

All at once there occurred in the next room a fearful noise, a screaming, a laughing, a tumult, a jubilation beyond all comparison. There was scraping on fiddles, there was jangling with shovels and tongs, there was singing, yelling, piping; and in the midst of this din were heard all kind of exclamations, of which this alone was intelligible:

“Papa! papa! now we know the piece! Now the scene is in order! Hurra, hurra!”

The jubilant herd rushed now like a foaming torrent into the room; but when the wild young people beheld Cornet Carl, their delight was beyond all bounds. A universal cry was uttered:

“Iphigenie, Iphigenie! Hurra, hurra! Cornet H—— Cornet Carl, will be our Iphigenie! Hurra! Long live Iphigenie the Second, long live Cornet Iphigenie! Long live——”

“Death and the devil!” thought the Cornet, as the wild crowd regularly fell upon him, and endeavoured to drag him with them, amid the cry, “Come, Iphigenie! Come, Cornet Carl, hence, hence! We will have a rehearsal immediately! The Cornet may hold his part in his hand—come, come, only!”

“Hocus-pocus over Cornet Carl! Fall down on your knees, and rise up as Iphigenie.”

This last was basooned forth by the sweet little Agnes D——, who stood on tiptoes to hang a veil over Cornet Carl’s head, but could not reach up to his ears. Lieutenant

Ruttelin came to her assistance. Eleonora D—— and Mina P—— had already swung a large shawl over his shoulders, and three young gentlemen endeavoured to wrap him round with a sheet, which should be a gown. Among the seconds of the Misses D——, Lieutenant Arvid was also to be seen.

The Cornet resisted; it was in vain; he raised his voice, shouted to and with them,—in vain—he could not, amid the noise around him, either make himself understood, or heard.

Actual despair, the result of pure vexation, overcame him, and brought him to a desperate resolution. Making use of his strength, not in the most polite manner, he pushed with both arms right and left the people from him, tore off the sheet, and—ran—ran through an open door, which he saw before him, and striking into a long row of rooms, looked neither to the right nor the left, but ran, ran, ran! Ran over a servant-girl, three chairs, two tables, and came at length from room to room, out into a great dining-room, on the other side of which was a porch. This the Cornet knew, and was just about hastening there, when he was aware of the jubilant herd, with the loud cry of Iphigenie, Iphigenie! who were coming through the porch to meet him. The Cornet, in the greatest distress of mind, was just about to turn round, when he saw near him a half-open door which led to a little winding staircase.

He shot down this like an arrow. It was dark and narrow—turned and turned. And when at length his feet reached firm land, the head of the Cornet itself began to turn round too. He stood in a little dark passage. From an iron-door which stood ajar gleamed a stripe of light. The Cornet passed through this door also. Through an opposite window, defended with stout iron-bars, shone a feeble and descending autumn sun, and lit up the white-grey stone walls of the vaulted room. The Cornet found himself—in a prison?—no, in a larder.

The Cornet sought after a way of escape. There was indeed in the little passage a door, opposite to the door of the vault, but it must be opened with a key, and no key was there. The Cornet sought and sought—in vain. He sate down on a bread chest in the vault, freed himself from his shawl and veil, and heard with satisfaction how the wild chase rushed forth overhead, and seeking traces of him, drove about

in the neighbourhood ; but he heard them always sufficiently near, to prevent him from coming up. Unhappy, indignant, weary, angry with the whole world, he stared before him almost without the power of thinking. A dish of confectionery, the remains of a pasty, of veal cutlets, and currant-cream, standing in the sunshine on a table, met his eye kindly and invitingly.

The Cornet experienced a strange emotion ; in the midst of his despair, plagued with a thousand tormenting thoughts, he felt—hunger.

Poor human nature ! Oh man, crown of creation ! Dust—king of the dust ! Is it heaven or hell which storms within thy breast ? Eat must thou nevertheless ! One minute an angel, another an animal ! Poor human nature !

And on the other side :

Happy human nature ! Happy duality, which alone preserves the unity of the being. The animal comforts the spirit, the spirit the animal, and thus alone can the human being live.

The Cornet lived—was hungry—saw food, and did not long delay to satisfy his hunger therewith. The pasty was soon added to more substantial stuff.

Forgive ! forgive, young lady reader ! I know—a lover, a hero of romance in particular, ought not to be so prosaic, so earthly—and our hero is perhaps in danger of losing all your kind sympathy. But reflect, reflect, charming creatures, who live on rose-odour and feelings, he was a man—and worse—a Cornet ; he had had a long ride, and had not eaten a morsel the whole day. Reflect on that !

“ But is it becoming to eat in this way in other people’s larders ? ”

Ah, my most gracious Chief-mistress-of-ceremony ! when a man is very unhappy and very much embittered, very heart-inwardly weary of the world—then people think that everything is becoming to them, which in any way is becoming in itself, and does not overturn anything but *convenances*. One has then an actual delight in trampling upon these, as upon other kind of weeds, and is often in that kind of state of mind, a beautiful cosmopolitan spirit, which makes one capable of saying “ Get out of the way ! ” to the whole world.

Cornet Carl had just cleared the pasty out of the way,

when a tumult, increasing in strength, renewed its shrill cries after the unlucky "Iphigenie!" and a rattling and noise on the top of the stairs made known to him that the hunting-herd spied out and were upon his track. Quite beside himself, he sprung to the window, seized with all his might one of the iron-bars, with the intention of loosening it, and, cost what it would, of making his escape.

Oh ray of deliverance! The Cornet seized the key, it went into the keyhole; and, as if chased by furies (the Cornet thought in this moment of bewilderment that all the sweet, accomplished Misses D—— had Medusa-heads), flew through a long passage out into the porch, down the steps, over the court, and upon the back of Blanka. Scarcely was he in the saddle, before, like a swarm of bees streaming out of the mouth of the beehive, the raging herd burst forth from the gate, singing, nay, screaming in chorus:

Iphigenie! Iphigenie!
Heavens, what gross poltroonery!
Lovely maid, where art thou, then?
Come again, oh come again!

The Cornet dashed off, and soon vanished from the eyes of the chorus, behind the trees. Three young gentlemen, who, in the joyousness of their hearts, believed nothing else than that all this was merely a madly merry frolic, mounted their horses in a twinkling, and followed the fugitive.

When the Cornet saw himself again pursued, he suddenly rode more slowly, to the great astonishment of the chasing triumvirate, who speedily overtook him, and surrounded him with shrill laughter and cries.

"Aha! aha! Now we have the Cornet fast—now there is no more help. Give yourself up captive, Cornet H——, and turn round directly with us." And one of them seized upon his horse's bridle.

But the arm was rudely struck back; and looking stiffly and proudly upon his pursuers, the Cornet said with warmth:

"If the gentlemen had the least grain of sense, they must have seen directly that I am in anything but the humour to play and to be played with. They would now also see that all these frolics are disgusting to me. I wish them at the devil, and you with them! Leave me in peace."

"The deuce, that's very abusively said!" said one of the

triumvirate, and put his horse at the same pace as Cornet Carl's; whilst the other two gentlemen, standing rebuffed and taking counsel together for a moment, galloped back again amid loud laughter.

The Cornet rode gently, and looked with a keen, angry, and inquiring glance at his unbidden companion, who observed him with a pair of large, clear, light blue eyes with a kind of ironical quietness.

The two silent riders now reached a cross-road. Here the Cornet turned himself proudly to his companion, and said :

"I presume that we part here ; good night, sir."

"No," replied the other, carelessly and ironically, "I have now a few words to say to you."

"When and where you please," said the Cornet, firing up.

"Hoho! hoho!" said the other, ironically; "do you take the matter so ill? Where and when you please, are indeed words which we may use as a kind of challenge—when and where one pleases to take one another's lives. Now, for my part, that can certainly be when and where you please; but this time I do not mean it to be so serious. I only accompany you to hold a little conversation, to see whether I can enliven you a little, excite you a little—to converse with you."

"With certain people," said the Cornet, "I converse most willingly with the sword in my hand—that keeps at a distance."

"Sword?" said his opponent, carelessly; "why a sword?—why not rather with a pistol? That talks louder, and serves also to keep folks at a distance. I don't fight willingly with the sword."

"Perhaps with pins rather," said the Cornet, disdainfully.

"Yes, pins; or rather hair-pins," replied his opponent, smilingly, as he took off his hat, and from the richest plaits of hair which ever adorned a lady's head, drew a large hair-pin, to which he (or rather she) fastened a little note, which she reached to the Cornet, with these words, which she uttered in a very different tone:

"If you find this more painful than the point of a sword, forgive those who must bring it to you against their will."

With this the blue-eyed horsewoman, Therese D——, gave

the Cornet a friendly, compassionate look, saluted him lightly, turned round her horse, and vanished quickly from his wondering eyes.

But these soon expressed another feeling, for he recognised in the address of the note the handwriting of Hermina. With feelings which one can easily imagine, the Cornet opened the letter and read the following:—

“My only friend upon earth! Farewell! farewell! If thou come, it is too late. I have been compelled to yield to my mother’s despairing prayers. To-day I set off to Stockholm. To-morrow I am Genserik’s wife—if I live till then. My brother, my friend, my all—ah, forgive me! Farewell!

“HERMINA.”

“Now to Stockholm!” said the Cornet, with desperate and firm determination to win her—or die! “Thanks, eternal Heaven!—there yet is time.”

The evening began to be stormy and dark. The Cornet felt nothing and cared for nothing around him, but rode at full speed to the inn.

“This moment, a stout active horse!” cried the Cornet, in a thundering voice; “I will pay what you will!”

In a short time a snorting steed neighed merrily under the wild rider, who with voice and spur still more excited his courage, and with the blind fury of impatience sped onward, onward, over——; but let us take breath for a moment.

“KLA-WHIT! KLA-WHIT!”

The Corpse-Owl.

It was night. The moon’s silver flood streamed quietly down over the castle of Thorsborg, where all seemed still, because no light shone from the deep windows, speaking of a wakeful human eye, of a heart which knew no rest. Ah!—and yet——

The clear lamp of night shone into the Colonel’s room, and lighted up, one after another, the gilded-framed family portraits, whose forms seemed by the pale bluish beams to come again to life, and from the night of antiquity, in whose shadows their joys and pains, hatred and love, prayer and glances, had long been extinguished, now looked forth with

quiet dreamy smiles upon the combats of their living descendants with the dark powers of life, and in the spirit of these thoughts—which thought alone perceives—whisper,

Thou wilt forget, wilt be forgotten quite—
The combat of the day be hid in night;
Repose will follow when thy strife shall cease.
Spirit, keep this in mind—and have thou peace!

Peace? Quiet, apparitions!—you wish to comfort. But there are moments when thoughts upon this word of the grave and of heaven make us shed bitter tears.

The Colonel stood in his window and looked out into the moonlight night. His lofty brow was paler than common, and dark fire beamed in his deep-set eyes.

A storm-wind raged now and again through the courtyard, and carried along with it heaps of yellow leaves, which struck up a whirling dance before the old rock-firm building, and reminded one of courtiers, who tried to amuse their dark glancing prince. The flag-staff on the tower swung round gratingly, and an uneasy, anxious whistling, such as in stormy weather one hears in great buildings, passed lamentingly here and there through the castle. This sound was worthy to be the messenger of misfortune; it distressed the hearer like melancholy forebodings. White clouds, of strange, fantastical shapes, were driven over the heavens, and resembled hosts flying forth with torn banners. They wrapped a storm-sail over the queen of night, who nevertheless quickly broke through it with conquering beams, and at length they assembled themselves in dark grey masses lower down on the horizon.

The colonel contemplated with uneasy and gloomy feelings the wild conflicts of nature. He bitterly felt that the spirit of discontent with his poisonous breath disturbed also the peace of his hitherto so happy and united family. *He*, who loved his own family so dearly, who was so tenderly beloved by them in return, he was now all at once become as it were a stranger to them. Wife, children, removed themselves from him—turned their faces away from him; and it was his fault; he had refused their prayers; they were unhappy through him; and at this moment, when his conscience bore witness that he had firmly adhered to his principles of right—that, without wavering, he had acted up to his severe but

lofty ideas—in this moment painful feelings arose in his heart, which seemed to accuse him of having erred in their application, and thereby, that he had caused suffering which he might have prevented—that he had embittered the days of those beings whom he was called upon to make happy and to bless. A physical sensation of pain, which was peculiar to him, and which he mostly perceived when his soul was painfully excited—a spasm of the chest, which made breathing difficult, was now more than commonly acute during these gloomy thoughts. He felt himself solitary; no one, at this moment, felt tenderness towards him; nobody's thoughts hovered above him on the peace-bringing dove-wings of prayer; he was solitary! A tear forced itself to his manly eye, and he looked up on high with a dark wish soon to leave a world where pain ruled.

A white cloud, which bore the form of a human being with outstretched arms, floated alone, along the starry vault; it appeared to descend lower and lower, and the outstretched misty arms seemed to approach the Colonel. He thought upon Elisabeth—upon her love—on her promise to be with him after death. Was it not as if her spirit would now embrace him? Was it not her apparition which now, when every affectionate voice was silent around him, descended that she might solitarily call to him through the night, "I love thee! I love thee!"

Nearer and nearer came the ghost-like appearance; the eye of the Colonel followed it with melancholy longing, and almost unconsciously he raised his arms towards it. Then was it suddenly snatched up by the storm-wind—the extended arms were rent from the misty body, and in broken, wild flames, like a mysterious fantasy, the white cloud passed by above the turrets of the tower. Space was desolate. The Colonel laid his hand upon his breast—it was desolate there. Some deep sighs laboured forth from its painful recesses. At this bitter moment some one approached him with soft footsteps—an arm stole under his, a hand was laid familiarly and tenderly upon his hand, and he felt a head lean softly upon his shoulder. He looked not around—he questioned not—he knew that *she* now was near him, who for so many years had shared with him joy and pain; she alone could divine his hidden pain—she alone in the silent night came to

him with consolation and love. He laid his arm quietly around the companion of his life, and held her closely to his breast, when soon both the inward and outward pain allayed themselves. Thus stood the wedded pair for long, and saw the storm travel over the earth and chase amid the clouds. They said not one word in explanation of that which had occurred, not one word of excuse. What need was there of it? *Reconciliation* clasped them to its heavenly breast. They stood heart throbbing to heart, they were *one*.

The storm, which increased every moment, moved with raging wings the tower-bell, which had just struck twelve. The dull strokes of the bell were perceived. The Colonel held his wife closer to his breast, who at this moment was thrilled by an involuntary tremor. She looked up to her husband. His eye was immovably riveted upon one single point, and hers, following in the same direction, remained still and immovable like his.

On the road, which was visible from this side, almost in a straight line to a considerable distance from the building, a black body was moving along, which, as it approached the castle, assumed every moment a larger size and a more extraordinary form. Before long they could distinguish by the light of the moon that it consisted of several persons, who in a particular manner seemed held together, and as it were moved together very slowly, but altogether in a body. Now it was hidden by the trees of the avenue—now again it was in sight and much nearer. Several men seemed to be carrying something heavy with great care.

"It is a funeral procession!" whispered her Honour.

"Impossible! at this hour!" replied the Colonel.

Nearer and nearer came the dark mass. Now it entered the court. The wind blew wildly and bestrewed it with withered leaves, and took with it the hats from the heads of several of the bearers, but none of them went to seek after them. The procession advanced right forward to the principal building. Now it ascended the steps—so softly, so carefully; blows thundered at the door—all was silent and still for a moment—the door opened, and the train entered the house. Without saying a word, the Colonel left his wife and went hastily out of the room, the door of which he locked, and sprang down stairs. The bearers had set down

their burden between the pillars of the hall. It was a bier. A dark cloak covered it. The bearers stood around with uncertain and dejected countenances.

"Who have you there?" asked the Colonel, in a voice which as it seemed that he had not the power to prevent trembling. No one replied. The Colonel went nearer, and lifted up the covering. The moon shone through the lofty gothic windows down upon the bier. A bloody corpse lay there. The Colonel recognised his son.

Oh paternal pain! Cover with your wings, ye angels of heaven, your smiling countenances, look not down upon a father's pain! Be extinguished, extinguished, ye beaming lights of the firmament! Come dark night, and with thy holy veil hide from all eyes that pang which has no tears, has not a word. Oh never can human eye penetrate a father's pain!

Noble and unfortunate father! when we saw thy eyes fixed upon thy son, we turned away ours; but thou hadst our fervent prayers.

All the domestics were, together with myself, put in motion by the arrival of the message of misfortune; we all stood dumb around the bier. At a motion of the Colonel, and the words, "a surgeon!" every one was in activity. A messenger set off directly to the city to fetch a skilful surgeon, one well known to the family, and the lifeless body was lifted from the bier, and carried to a chamber. The tears of the bearers fell upon the body of their beloved young master. The Colonel and I followed the slow mournful procession. I dared not look at him, but heard the deep almost rattling sighs by which he breathed with the greatest difficulty.

When the body was laid upon a bed, they began, almost without hope, eagerly to make use of all means which are available to revive a fainting or swooning person. The feet were brushed, the breast, the temples, and palms of the hands, were rubbed with spirit. Blood now began to run slowly from a wound in the head; it was bound up. Busied with the feet, I ventured an anxious, inquiring look at the Colonel, but turned it away again hastily with horror. He was the colour of death—a spasm had drawn together and disfigured his features. The lips were closely compressed, the eyes fixed.

All at once I felt, as it were, a light tremor pass through the stiffened limbs which my hands touched. I scarcely breathed. It was repeated; I looked up to the Colonel.

He held one hand tight upon his breast, the other he laid on his son's mouth. He seized mine and led it there. A faint breath was perceptible. A feeble throbbing moved the temples; a sigh, the first salutation of reviving life, heaved the breast, and a faint tinge of life spread itself over the face. The Colonel looked up to heaven. Oh with what an expression! Oh fatherly gladness! thou art worth being purchased with pain. Look down, oh angels of heaven, into the blessed father's heart! It is a sight for you.

Now the slumbering eyes opened, and mirrored themselves in the father's look, which, with the highest expression of anxious gladness, rested upon him. They remained thus fixed for a moment, and then softly closed again. The Colonel, terrified, placed his hand again upon his son's mouth, to ascertain if the breathing were weaker than before; then the lips moved themselves to a kiss upon the paternal hand, and an expression full of peace and reconciliation spread itself over the young man's countenance. He continued to lie immovable, with his eyes closed as of one sleeping. The breath was drawn feebly, and he made no effort to speak.

When the prudent and affectionate Helena sate beside me by her brother's bed, the Colonel left us to seek for his wife. He beckoned to me to follow him, and I sprang up stairs, pinching my cheeks the while that I might not look like a messenger of death. Her Honour sate motionless, with her hands clasped together; and, in the moonlight, was not unlike one of the pale ghosts of antiquity which glanced around her in a silent family circle. When we entered, she said to us with quiet anguish, "Something has happened! What has happened? Tell me—tell me everything!"

With admirable calmness, with inward tenderness, the Colonel prepared his wife for that which awaited her; and endeavoured, at the same time, to inspire her with a consolation and a hope, greater, certainly, than he himself cherished. After this, he led her into the sick-room. Without speaking a single word, without uttering a sound, without letting fall a tear, the unhappy mother went up to her

son, who now appeared to me nearer death than at first. The Colonel stood now at the foot of the bed, and preserved his manly, powerful deportment; but when he saw his wife softly lay her head down upon her son's bloody pillow, and with all a mother's love and a mother's indescribable expression of pain kiss his pale lips, and the uncommon likeness of both countenances became now more striking amid the mournful shadow of death, which seemed, as it were, to rest upon both,—then he bowed down his head, hid his face with his hands, and wept like a child. Ah! we all wept bitterly. It seemed to us as if the spark of hope, which was just kindled, was extinguished, and nobody thought that the mother could survive the son.

And yet, human cares, gnawing pain, sharp sword, which pierces through the inmost of the soul—you kill not. The wonderful seed of life can nourish itself even with sorrow—can, like the polypus, be cut asunder and grow together again, and endure, and suffer. Sorrowing mothers, wives, brides, daughters, sisters—womanly hearts, which sorrow always strikes deepest and breaks, you bear witness to this. You have seen your beloved die—have believed that you died with them—and yet you lived, and could not die. But what do I say? If you live, if you are able to submit yourselves to life, is it not because a breeze from a higher region has infused comfort and strength into your soul? Can I doubt of it, and think of the noble Thilda R——, the mourning bride of the noblest husband? Thou didst receive his last sigh—with him thou lost all upon earth—thy future was dark and joyless,—and yet thou wast so resigned, so gentle, so friendly, so good! Thou didst weep; but saidst consolingly to sympathising friends, “Trust me—it is not so difficult.” Oh, then they understood that there was a consolation which the world gives not. And when thou, endeavouring to mitigate thy pain, saidst “I will not make him uneasy by my grief,” who could doubt that *he* whose happiness on the other side of the grave thou soughtest to preserve, was near thee, and surrounded thee with his love, and strengthened thee, and comforted thee?

“And there appeared to her an angel of heaven, and strengthened her.”

Patient sufferers, hail to you! You reveal the kingdom

of God upon earth, and show us the way to heaven. From the crown of thorns upon your heads we see eternal roses bloom forth.

But I return to the inconsolable mother, whom the first unexpected blow of misfortune had overpowered. She collected herself—to go through a long time of trial, for her beloved wavered a long time between life and death. She herself failed of strength and resolution properly to attend upon him. Had it not been for Helena, had it not been for the Colonel, and had it not been (I shame to say it) for me—then;—but now we were all there, and therefore (through the mercy of God) the Cornet remained—alive.

In times of sorrow and mourning, souls become united. When outward misfortunes assail us—then we draw one towards another, and it is for the most part when watered by the tears of pain, that the most beautiful flowers of friendship and devotion grow up. Within the family, a common misfortune mostly effaces all little contentions and misunderstandings, to unite all minds, all interests in one point. In particular when death threatens a beloved member, then are silenced all discords in the family circle, then only harmonious, even if they be mournful feelings, move all hearts, attune all thoughts, and form a happy garland of peace, within whose bosom the beloved invalid reposes.

After this occurrence with Cornet Carl, and during the course of his illness, all unpleasantness, all constraint in the H—— family vanished; every care, every feeling, every thought, united themselves around him, and when his life was out of danger, when he began to enjoy himself—oh how vividly they felt; how highly they loved one another!—and what an indescribable necessity there was to make one another happy; how they feared in any way to darken the brightening heaven!

It was extremely affecting to me,—but I cannot imagine what is come to me to-day that I wish to touch the heart so much—and to make my readers weep, both at my sorrow and at my joy,—as if there did not fall useless tears enough in the urn of sensibility,—or as if I myself had become regularly low-spirited with the H—— family. Let us therefore pay a flying visit to the D—— family, and see whether we cannot amuse ourselves a little. Through the power of my

magic-wand (the most miserable goose-quill on earth), we will now betake ourselves, that is to say, my reader and me, for a moment to

LÖFSTAHOLM.

BREAKFAST was in. The table was full of people. Upon the table stood bowls, and skåls were proposed.

"The deuce take me!" said a voice (which the reader perhaps recognises), "if I have not a desire to drain the cup to the very dregs once more in a skål to Miss Eleonora!"

A lively neighbour, as red as a peony, said, kindly admonishing, "What would Julie H—— say to it?"

"Julie H——. The deuce take me! I don't trouble myself about that which Julie H—— says. Miss Julie may see what she has occasioned with her caprices. It would please me, the deuce take me! some fine day to send back her betrothal-ring. Yes, yes!"

"Skål—Arvid!" cried Lieutenant Ruttelin, "a skål for independent men!"

"And for their friends!" cried the little Lord Byron. "I mean their lady friends," whispered he to Eleonora—"but it will not do for the rhyme's sake—do you understand?"

"Yes, I don't trouble myself much about that," she replied.

"Lieutenant Arvid! Lieutenant Arvid P——, I have the honour to drink skål to you!" exclaimed the Ironmaster D——.

"And I, and I, and I!" repeated many voices.

"Fill up your neighbour's glass, Eleonora!"

"Ladies and Gentlemen! I propose a skål for Lieutenant Arvid's bride—that she may bethink herself, and consider what belongs to her happiness—and take him again into favour."

CHORUS.

"Yes, that she may——"

A VOICE.

"Ladies and Gentlemen—the deuce take me! ladies and gentlemen—that is an affair about which I don't trouble myself. I have a great desire not to be taken into favour again—I—but—but to—yes, to send back her betrothal-ring—the deuce take me!"

CHORUS.

"Skål for independent men! Skål for Lieutenant Arvid!"

"And skål for girls without caprices; skål for my Eleonora and her sisters!" cried the Ironmaster D——.

CHORUS.

"Skål, Skål!"

"Drain the bowl!" added the little Lord Byron, with a grimace.

TEA AND SUPPER.

I HAVE just had the honour of seeing my readers at a little déjeûner; I now pray for the honour of entertaining them at a little supper. Nay, nay, do not be frightened! It will not be great, nor grand; nor will it be like a rousing up of his Excellency *Ennui*, nor will keep you up in wakeful pain beyond midnight.

I cover a little round table in the blue boudoir at Thorsborg. In the middle of the table Helena has placed a large basket of grapes, and wreathed it with asters, gilliflowers, and other flowers which still retain their hues under the pale beams of the autumn sun. Around the Bacchus crown are arranged those simple dishes, of which one finds mention made in the legend of Philemon and Baucis, as well as in all idyls where suppers are talked of. I shall waste, therefore, no paper by the enumeration of milk and cream and other pastoral dishes.* Her Honour would perhaps not forgive me for passing over in silence a dish of honey-cake, from which flowed an aromatic juice, as well as a great tart (to the perfecting of which she had lent a hand) filled with plums—more light, enticing, and delicate than one can—the Colonel, it is true, declared that when he had eaten a piece it lay rather heavy on his stomach; but, as her Honour, after a little vexation, said, "One does not know what oppresses some folks. Gentlemen have such curious ideas!"

At that very moment, for which I pray the attention of my kind reader, her Honour left off rubbing, for the fifth time, a speck from a water-bottle, which in the end she dis-

* Ah, heaven have mercy on me! It comes now clearly into my mind that Baucis, when the unexpected strangers arrived, ran out in order to sacrifice to their entertainment her only goose. And I, who have invited so many strangers to supper, can treat them neither with goose, calf, nor turkey! I am ashamed of myself, up to the eyes!

covered to be a peculiarity in the glass itself, and therefore, alas, immovable! At this moment there assembled by degrees, in the room, lighted mildly by a lamp, Julie (without the betrothal-ring), Professor L——, the Magister with his pupils, and last of all, entered, between his father and Helena, Cornet Carl, who for the first time since the fall from his horse joined the family circle during the evening hours. Her Honour went to meet him with tears in her eyes, kissed him, and allowed herself no rest till she had seated him on the sofa, between the Colonel and herself, comfortably supported by soft cushions, which she even would place around his head in such a manner as if it could only be sustained by the help of winged cherubs. The Colonel observed too, with sweet roguish pleasure, and a laconic "Ay! ay!" how the cushions tumbled to right and left. Her Honour declared that the Colonel blew them. When she had settled them to her mind, she seated herself silently, and contemplated, with a tender, pensive smile, the pale countenance of her son, whilst tears, which she herself did not observe, rolled slowly down her cheeks. The Colonel looked at her so long with a mild serious eye, that at length she was aroused by its expression to attention to herself, and she immediately conquered her emotion, that she might not disturb the rest of her beloved invalid.

It was delightful to see how the little Dumplings, with looks full of appetite, and open mouths, brought to their sick brother something of all the good things with which Helena had loaded the table, and how indescribably difficult it was for them to resign the plates. Julie knelt before her brother, and chose, from a dish which she had set upon the sofa, the largest and most beautiful grapes, which she gave to him.

I had almost a mind to ask Professor L—— what book it was which he read so devotedly and with such attention. He would either have answered "Julie," or he would have looked a little confused, and have turned to the title-page of the book, which would have looked very suspicious—namely, as regarded the reading of the book.

In the looks of the greater part of the little company, this evening, there was a something very unusual,—a constraint, a liveliness, a something, in a word, like that which sparkles in the eyes of children when they on Christmas-eve expect the arrival of the Christmas-goat.

Cornet Carl alone was dejected and silent : the indifferent, feeble expression of his eyes testified of a joyless heart ; and although he replied mildly and kindly to all the evidences of affection which were heaped upon him, there was a something so mournful, even in his smile, that it called forth tears afresh in the eyes of her Honour.

In the mean time the Magister went fishing about for somebody who would play chess with him. He had more than once set out the chess-pieces on the board, and turned it round, and coughed at least seven times, to give a sort of signal that opponents desirous of battle might now announce themselves. But as no combatant presented himself, he set out now on a crusade to seek for such, and challenge them. Professor L——, who saw himself first threatened with a challenge, stuck his nose so solemnly into his book, that the Magister had no courage to venture the attempt, and turned to Julie, who fled to the other end of the room. After that, he was about to try Helena, but she was so occupied with serving at table ; —at last he came up to me with a determined countenance. “ I must,” I said, “ go and see whether we shall have moonlight this evening.” We had last night the moon in the wane.

The poor Magister at last, with a deep sigh, threw a glance on the little Dumplings, who were just now seizing upon the tart, and admonished them to make good speed, as he was thinking of showing them the movements of the chess-pieces.

The Colonel, who blew his tea, and who with a smile observed the movements of the little company, now raised his voice, and said, giving to every word an unusual emphasis,—

“ I have been told to-day that Lieutenant Arvid P—— has sought from Eleonora D—— (and has found it too) consolation for the instability of a certain young lady.”

Oh, how Julie crimsoned. Professor L—— dropped his book to the floor.

“ I fancy,” continued the Colonel, “ that this may turn out very well. Eleonora D—— is, I believe, a clever girl, who knows what she is about, and understands how to take the best side of others. Arvid P—— is a good match for her, and she is a good match for Arvid. I wish them all possible happiness.”

“ I too !” said Julie, half-aloud, and stole towards her father, delighted to discover in his words an acquiescence in

the dissolution of her betrothal. She looked at him a moment, with an expression in which hope, joy, tenderness, and doubt alternated; but when his eye, full of fatherly gentleness, met hers, she threw her arms around his neck, and gave him more kisses than I could count.

Professor L—— threw his arms around himself (with the mind probably of embracing somebody), and contemplated the beautiful group with a look—oh, how eloquent is a look sometimes!

“Give me a glass of wine, Beata!” exclaimed the Colonel; “I will drink a joyful and joy-bringing skål. A glass of Swedish wine of course!”

(Friendly reader, it was berry wine he meant—and which he called for me to bring him. Forgive this little boasting.)

I gave it to the Colonel.

“Skål to thee, my son Carl!” cried he, with a beaming glance.

At this moment the harmonious sounds of a harp were heard from the next room. An electrical thrill seemed to go through everybody in our room, and a sort of illumination kindled up all eyes. The Cornet was about to start up, but was held back by his father, who laid his arm round him; whilst her Honour, in anxiety of his evidently violent emotions, threw upon him more eau de Cologne than was reasonable or agreeable. To these harp-notes followed others, and yet others. Thus, like the delicious odours of a spring morning, there gushed forth by degrees an enchanting stream of beautiful and pure melody, which now rose, now sunk, with infinite delight, and which penetrated so beautifully the inmost of the heart, that one might have said that the finger of an angel touched these strings. To these tones was soon united a voice even still more delightful. A young female voice, pure, clear, and melodious, which trembled in the beginning, but by degrees acquired more and more certainty, and sang with more and more enchanting expression:

Remember'st thou the moment when
Thy heart a heart had found,
And was so blessed—and love's flame then
Lit up life's barren ground?

It was so sweet, it was so bright,
The world was all so fair,
Each thought bore up to heaven's height
Our gratitude and prayer.

Then came a time, whose bitter woe
Did soul from soul compel,
And sadly passed from tongue to tongue
A trembling *fare thee well!*

Farewell all joy which earth can give,
Farewell all pleasure here!
Farewell, my friend! Oh, care is o'er,
See all again is clear!

See, thy beloved is near to thee;
Meets thee with blissful heart,
And whispers, "I am ever thine,
We never more shall part!"

What did the Cornet do in the mean time? A firework of joy and rapture flashed from his eyes. His feet moved, he stretched forth his arms; but withheld by the arm, by the prayer and eye of his father, he could not rise from the sofa. The soul also soothed its vehemence during the song; feelings of quiet happiness seemed to possess his soul, and he looked up to the ceiling with a look as if he saw heaven open.

Her Honour, who in the mean time had gone out, returned at the close of the song, leading by the hand the enchanting singer—the angelically beautiful Hermina. The Colonel rose, and went to meet them. With real fatherly affection he embraced the charming creature, and presented her solemnly to the company as his fourth beloved daughter.

Let nobody blame the Cornet that he did not instantly spring up and throw himself on his knees before his beloved. He really could not do it. The feeling of transporting happiness was too strong for his exhausted strength, and a transient faintness overcame him at the moment when he saw, on the hand of his mother, that beloved being enter the room whom he had believed to be lost for ever. Her Honour now emptied over him her whole bottle of eau de Cologne.

As he again opened his eyes he met those of Hermina, which full of affection and tears, rested upon him. The Colonel took the hands of the young lovers and united them. The whole family closed in a circle around the happy pair. Words were not spoken; but those looks, those smiles, full of love and bliss—oh, how much better they are than words!

PROBABLE CHORUS OF MY READERS.

BUT how? But what? But why? But when? How came it about? How did it go on?

I shall have the honour, methodically and orderly, as is becoming to a House-counsellor, on this subject to give my

EXPLANATION.

When a jelly has nearly finished boiling, one throws into it white-of-egg (as is said in artistic phrase) to clear it.* So, also, when a novel, little story, or literary composition of any kind, approaches its completion, then one throws in an explication or explanation, to get rid of the sediment; and this is generally much of the quality of white-of-egg, namely, is sticky and cementing, clear and clarifying, and tolerably insipid.

I see already what faces will be made over my white-of-egg chapter, and am myself rather uneasy and anxious about it, and think it will be best, instead of my own written word, to give my reader part of a conversation which one fine November afternoon took place between Mrs. D—— and Mrs. Mellander, who was hers, as well as the whole neighbourhood's newspaper and advertising gazette; but in order to spare my reader the mistakes and conjectures of the two ladies, I will, unknown to Mrs. M—— and Mrs. D——, introduce a prompter on the scene; that is to say, a breath of the spirit of truth, which, whether it passes over the field of the history of the world, or through the smallest chink in the door of domestic life, is an important, always dear-bought auxiliary or assistant. My prompter is besides unlike him who is engaged at our royal theatres, in this respect, that he prompts not the actors, but the spectators to the right track. But to the affair.

The scene is at Löfstaholm, in Mrs. D——'s boudoir.

(Mrs. D—— sits over the afternoon coffee. Mrs. Mellander comes in.)

MRS. D.

Nay, my sweet Mrs. Mellander, nay at length—welcome!

*The reader is respectfully requested to recollect that the House-counsellor's good fortune, or ascent, was prepared or boiled up in a wine-jelly. Now, therefore, in grateful memory of the offspring of hartshorn, she serves up therewith a dessert.

I have waited almost half an hour. The coffee is almost cold—I must certainly have it warmed.

MRS. M.

Heaven forbid! my little, your Honour—cold or warm is good enough for me.

MRS. D. (*as she serves her*).

Now, Mrs. Mellander, now what news?

MRS. M.

Ay, your Honour, now I am, thank God, clear about all—a bit more sugar—if you please.

MRS. D.

Nay, tell me, tell me, then! I have heard say that the little wood-bird yonder,—Hermina, is adopted by the H—— Family as their own child—that she and Cornet Carl are betrothed—and that there soon will be a wedding.

PROMPTER.

Not for three years, says Colonel H——. The Cornet must first travel, and look about him in the world; and Hermina (her Honour says) must first learn Swedish rural economy, and that of itself will require three years.

MRS. M.

It seemed to me that somebody was talking near us;—are we alone?

MRS. D.

Not a Christian soul can hear us.

MRS. M.

Nay, then I shall tell your Honour a horrible story—but see—I will not have it said that I told it.

MRS. D.

Not a Christian soul shall know of it.

[*The prompter whistles.*]

MRS. M.

Well then! It runs so. In the beginning, the present Baroness K—— was in foreign parts married to a Swedish nobleman, who was called something of Stjern—and had by him a daughter—no other than that handsome young Hermina; about whom neither father nor mother troubled themselves greatly—because, do you see, they wished to have had a son, and the girl must have had a sad time of it at home.

Now—in the mean time comes Baron K—— there abroad—into—Taly—or whatever the country is called—and sees the handsome lady, Hermina's mother—falls madly in love with her, and she is over head and ears in love with him. Her husband was aware of it—there was a horrible disturbance in the house, and the two gentlemen got to fighting.

PROMPTER.

A duel.

MRS. M.

The end of it was that Baron K—— was obliged to leave the country. He returned now to Sweden, and lived there for a while a godless life, gambled and rioted till all his affairs fell into disorder. One day he heard that the husband of the handsome lady abroad was dead; and set off speedily, and thought to get a handsome wife, and with the handsome wife's money to pay his debts. Now—he courted the widow—she said yes to him—married him in privacy, thinking afterwards to get the forgiveness of her old father;—but he (a rich and high-bred personage) became raging mad against her, and disinherited her. Yes; the new-married folks had nothing to live upon in foreign lands. Nay—then they came handsomely hither, and on the very morning the trading-house in which was the remainder of K——'s property became bankrupt: and now the creditors from all sides sprang upon him, and he was obliged regularly to hide himself from them; therefore he lived in that little Wood-house there, and would let neither dog nor cat see him; and when perchance people came there, he was as mad as a wild bull; and was angry with his wife, whom he fancied had enticed the people there. Yes,—it must have been an unhappy and miserable life.

MRS. D.

But how came young H—— there?

MRS. M.

Yes, heaven knows that!—that I have not been able rightly to get at—but there he came—and the two young folks fell in love with each other. About the same time also there came there the handsome, rich Law-commissioner G——, and fell in love, too, with the little Hermina.

MRS. D.

That is altogether incomprehensible! The girl is altogether not handsome—no *fraicheur*, no colour.

MRS. M.

Ah! what is she beside the sweet Miss D——s? Like a radish beside beetroots.

MRS. D. (*offended*).

Mrs. M—— means probably roses.

PROMPTER.

Peonies.

MRS. M.

Yes—I mean so exactly,—of course. Where was I just now? I have it. Nay; the young H—— travelled in the mean time, and remained away the whole summer, and the Law-commissioner went continually to K——’s, and made himself agreeable. One fine day he was there courting; and what do you think? Hermina would not have him; and gave him a direct no. Nay, there was a disturbance in the house!

MRS. D.

The girl always seemed to me a romantic fool.

MRS. M.

In the autumn all Baron K——’s creditors set upon him and would have money, or would take him to prison. Your Honour sees the affair was this, that he during the summer had secretly visited Stockholm, and gambled and won, and therewith had maintained the housekeeping and kept off the creditors for a time. But all at once his luck took a turn, and he came into horrible difficulty. He then swore a deep oath, and said to Law-commissioner G——, “Pay for me ten thousand rixdollars, and you shall have Hermina for your wife.” And he replied, “As soon as she is my wife, I will pay the money on the morrow.” The Baron would at first terrify Hermina into saying “Yes.” But it would not do. He then threw himself on his knees before her and prayed, and the Baroness did so too—and the girl cried, and said merely, “Give me three days’ time.” The parents would not, but were obliged to submit; and during these days she wrote to Cornet H—— that he must come to her hand-over-head——

PROMPTER.

Not verbally correct.

MRS. D.

—— that he should pay the sum of money, and have her for wife.

PROMPTER.

She did not write so.

MRS. D.

An intriguing thing!

MRS. M.

Yes, truly! Nay—the Cornet came home quite beside himself; wished to have the money from his father, who said—no.

MRS. M.

Yes, yes; the old ones are all covetous. Nay, the rest I know. There was a dispute between father and son. Mrs. H—— got into it—they said foolish things to one another.

PROMPTER.

False!

MRS. M.

Yes; it became a regular family quarrel. The Cornet rode away desperate—came to the place in the wood,—found the K——s gone, was as if out of his mind, rode hither and thither the whole day, and met at last with an acquaintance whom he challenged.

PROMPTER.

False!

MRS. D.

Yes—and was carried home at night, as if dead, to his parents. But which way had K——s taken?

MRS. M.

That was in this way. There came people out who positively would seize upon Baron K——. Then he and the Baroness assailed Hermina with prayers—so that she, out of anguish of heart, said yes to anything. Law-commissioner G—— talked to the creditors, and promised to pay them in a few days. And so he conducted Hermina to Stockholm, that there on the following Sunday the banns might be published once for all, and directly afterwards they be married; all was to be done secretly, and in haste, because every one,

and the Law-commissioner in particular, was afraid of young H——.

MRS. D.

But how came it that there was no marriage?

MRS. M.

Ay, because Hermina became ill, and nearly half mad, like Clamentina in Grandson (a novel, your Honour knows), and she was about to put an end to her life.

PROMPTER.

False!

MRS. D.

How wicked!

MRS. M.

Her mother then became anxious, and sent a messenger to Colonel H——, with whom she had formerly been very well acquainted.

PROMPTER.

False! false! false!

As the prompter seems of the three speakers to be the one who knows best the progress of the pair (probably because he holds the manuscript in his hands), thus he may step down upon the stage, and endeavour to disentangle that which he is as capable of describing, as the others of relating falsely.

PROMPTER.

My gracious ladies and gentlemen, the affair is this: Hermina's suffering of soul, against which she had so long combated, brought on, during the days permitted to her, a sort of still insanity, which terrified all those around her. Genserik G——, who discovered in Stockholm how desperate K——'s affairs were, and who plainly perceived Hermina's dislike to him, withdrew from the game, and vanished all at once, without any one knowing where he was gone. Baron K—— saw quickly that nothing could save him from ruin, and determined to fly, and his wife to accompany him. It was in this moment of hopelessness, when a new star ascended for the unhappy husband and wife. They approached each other—they wept together—a veil of oblivion was dropped over the past—they promised to support one another through the weary journey of life—their earlier love awoke, and allowed them to hope, that if they preserved its

fire, they might even in the depths of misery find some happiness. The heart of the Baroness, whose ice-suffering appeared to have broken, bled for Hermina, and shuddered for her fate, of having to wander around the world with her unhappy parents as a prey to want and misery. One evening as she sat observing the lovely, pale girl consumed with care and suffering of mind, who now lay in a quiet slumber, she knew that her heart was breaking, and subduing her feeling of pride, she seized her pen and wrote the following lines to Colonel H——'s lady:

“A despairing mother calls upon the mercy of a mother. In four-and-twenty hours I shall leave Stockholm, to fly out of Sweden. My daughter I cannot and will not take with me. I will not see her become a prey to misery—for it is misery which I go to meet. Your estimable character, the kindness which I have myself seen beam from your countenance, has given me courage to turn myself to you with this prayer. Oh! (if you heard my trembling lips utter it—if you saw in my breast the broken and repentant mother's heart—you would listen to my prayers); receive, receive my child into your house, into your family! In mercy, receive her! Take my Hermina under your protection—take her as maid to your daughters—for that, at least, the grand-daughter of the Marquis Azavello might be suitable. Now she is weak and ill—weak in body and mind—she is not good for much now—but have patience with her. Ah! I feel—I become bitter, and—I must be humble! Forgive me! and if you will save me from despair—hasten—hasten hither like an angel of consolation, and clasp my child in your protecting arms. Then will I bless you and pray for you; oh, may you never know a moment as bitter as this!

“EUGENIA A——.”

This letter was received by Mrs. H—— some days after her son's accident. She showed it to the Colonel. Both of them immediately set off to Stockholm, and returned with Hermina, who from this moment received from them the affection of parents, and who soon in the atmosphere of peace and love which surrounded her, bloomed forth as lovely as she was happy.

[*Exit PROMPTER to make room for BEATA HVAR-DAGSLAG, who looks very much disposed to talk.*

Few people upon the theatre of life love the dumb parts. Every one wishes to come forward in his place to say something, even were it nothing more than "I am called Peter," or "I am called Paul, look at me! or listen to me!" and as I, Beata Hvardagslag, will not do myself the injustice to appear more discreet than I am, therefore I again step forward and say, "Listen to me."

Baron K—— vanished hastily with his wife out of Sweden. They took their way towards Italy, where the Baroness wished to make another attempt at a reconciliation with her father. They expected during this journey to have to struggle with every difficulty which want and poverty can occasion; but it was otherwise for them. In many places on the way they found, quite incomprehensibly, that they were provided for by some person quite unknown to them. In different cities lay sums of money ready for them to take up—a good angel seemed to attend and watch over them. The Baroness's letter to her daughter contained these tidings.

"It is all my husband's work," said her Honour to me one day, with a beaming expression of pride, affection, and joy. "K—— was his enemy during his youth, and had done him many wrongs. Although since that time they have been altogether separated, I know that my husband has not forgotten it, because he cannot forget it; but such is his revenge. He is a noble man—God bless him!"

I said "Amen!"

THE LAST SCHEME.

August, 1830.

THE widowed Archdeaconess, Mrs. Bobina Bult, sate in her travelling carriage, with the reins and whip in her firm hands. Round about her were packed, in hay, a mass of eatables in bags and tubs; in the middle, among these, her good friend, C. B. Hvardagslag.

The August evening was mild and beautiful, the way was good, the horse cheerful; and yet Mrs. Bobina's set-out looked shabby; for before her went an empty cart, driven by a young peasant lad, who seemed to have made up his mind to try her patience, as he drove, step my step, with her

carriage, preventing us from passing him; because, when we turned to the right, he turned to the right; and when we to the left, and tried to get past him, he was there before us. And all the while he sang with a full throat, songs on most disagreeable subjects; looked often round at us, and laughed scornfully. I looked up to Mrs. Archdeaconess Bobina Bult—for I am, alas! a little lady, and she is tall grown, and straight and powerful as a house-beam—and I remarked how her under-lip projected in a manner which I knew to betide anger. I saw her chin and the point of her nose grow of a crimson colour, and her little grey eyes shoot out arrows of vengeance. Many a time did we, both by good and bad words, admonish the boy to leave the road free, but in vain. Archdeaconess Bobina bit her lip, gave me the reins without saying a word, jumped out of the car, took some prodigious strides, and stood, one, two, three, beside our tormentor; seized him with a strong hand by the collar, dragged him out of his cart, laid him on the ground before he had time to think about resistance, and gave him, with the heavy handle of her whip, some blows upon the back, while she asked him whether he would beg pardon and mend, or prove still further the strength of her arm. Probably he was already sufficiently convinced of its unusual strength, for he was speedily humble and repentant, and promised all that one wished. Archdeaconess Bult allowed him now to get up, and gave him a short but powerful penance-sermon; the conclusion of which was so beautiful that it moved me, moved herself, and even the peasant lad, who wiped the tears from his eyes with his hat-brim. “I know thee,” added Mrs. Bobina, “thou art from the parish of Åminne; thy father has long been sick; thou canst come to me at Löfby on Monday morning, and have something for him.”

We now drove on uninterruptedly, but had now and then a detention by the way. In one place, we helped an old woman who had been upset with her cart; in another place, the Lady Archdeaconess dismounted to release, with much difficulty, a great pig which had set itself fast in a hedge, and whose lamentable cry went to the very innermost of the heart.

Towards sunset we saw Löfby. Small columns of smoke

rose corkscrew-like from the cottage chimneys, dispersed themselves in the clear evening air, and united themselves in a light transparent cloud, which, like a rose-coloured gauze veil, floated over the village, which, with its pretty houses, green gardens, and its murmuring, clear river, presented a charming view, as we slowly drove down an easily-descending hill, which quickly branched out into two arms; one of which carried us to our home, lying some fifty paces from the village.

The cows came in long rows from the pasture meadows to be milked, with jingling bells and peaceful lowing. Wood-horns sounded, peasant girls sang with clear and shrill voices; and to this sound was united the *bing-bong* of the church bells, which sung on the Saturday evening, "Good night" to the week, and announced the day of rest. Mrs. Bobina Bult's countenance was joyful and solemn. Everybody greeted her kindly and reverentially, and kindly did she greet everybody. When we had arrived at our little school, the swarm of children broke forth from the house amid sounding cries of joy, and embraced her with unbounded rapture and affection. Caresses and gingerbread were divided among all.

Many things now took up the time of Archdeaconess Bobina. One girl had just began to weave a web, another had just finished hers—these the Archdeaconess must see.

A servant man had cut his leg; the Lady Archdeaconess must bind it up: a little sick boy in a neighbouring yard could not rest (so his mother said) till he had seen the Lady Archdeaconess. A dear married couple had fallen out, and agreed that the Lady Archdeaconess should settle things between them; and so on, and so on.

First of all Mrs. Bobina talked with all her scholars; prayed with them all; wept with one little one deeply repentant for a serious oversight in the course of the day; admonished another; praised a third; and kissed and blessed them all, and went to look after her duties out of doors. When the clock struck eleven she had bound up the wound; mightily scolded at first, and then reconciled the married pair; comforted the little boy, and so on. When she returned she looked at the prices of weaving; arranged about the work and housekeeping for the morrow; eat in haste

two potatoes with a little salt, and then went to the other end of the village to convey to an anxious, sick, and unhappy mother the joyful tidings of a child now turned from the paths of vice.

I sate in the mean time in my room. Four little girls lay in beds around me, with rosy cheeks and snow-white sheets, sleeping quietly.

The calm beautiful August night, which was so warm that I could have my window open ; the silence and repose around me ; the light breathing of the slumbering children, had in them something delightful and pacifying, and awoke in me that still, pensive feeling which spreads calmness over the present, and often fans the remembrance of former years within us. The moon, that friend of the days of my childhood and youth, arose and looked kindly and pale over the birch-groves into my room. Its light stole caressingly over the closed eyelids of the children, then shone quietly upon a face which the days of life had withered—upon a breast whose feelings years have not yet been able to calm. Oh, how wonderfully floated forth upon the friendly beams all those beloved, mournful, and joyous memories of my past life—how clearly they ascended from the night, and crowded to my heart, so animated and warm ! All the people with whom during my life I had come in contact, and who had become dear or important to me, seemed as if they would assemble around me, and revive their influence by word and glance. The H—— family, from whom I now had been separated for nearly a year, came at this moment so near to me that I seemed as if I could talk with its amiable members, ask them how all stood within their home—whether they were happy, whether they yet called me to mind ? Yes—whether ? For I had not received for a long time the least token of remembrance, not a line, not a word. A childish anxious feeling of being forgotten—of rightly belonging to nobody—of being to persons whom we esteemed so highly and loved so much, so little—so nothing at all—overcame my heart for a moment. I could not help weeping—I sate with my handkerchief before my eyes, when Archdeaconess Bult, who had seen me at the window from the court, came in. She questioned me seriously, fully resolved to fathom the mystery, and I confessed my weak-

ness with humility. She blamed me with warmth, admonished and kissed me with motherly tenderness, and bade me to go to bed directly, and for her sake to take care of my health for a long time.

She left me ; but I did not obey her just then—struck a light, lighted my candle, and sate down to write a lecture—to myself. At that moment I heard the clock strike half-past twelve. All at once there was a noise in the house, and directly afterwards somebody sprang up stairs, and came to my room. My door opened softly, and the widow Lady Archdeaconess Bobina Bult, in nightcap and slippers, with her bed-cover over her shoulders, stood there with joy-kindling eyes, and a thick letter in her hand, which she reached to me. “From the H——s! the H——s!” she whispered. “I would not wait any longer for the city-messenger ; but just as I was lying down I heard him coming. I had a presentiment! Good night! Good night! God give thee joy!” And forth was Mrs. Bobina Bult.

I had joy. Julie’s letter was as follows :

August 13, 1830.

It is a clergyman’s little wife who writes to you. It is two months since I was no longer Julie H——, but Julie L——. I had not courage to write before. I have been bewildered in my head, and properly anxious for some time. The causes : first, the horrible respect I had for my dear husband—yes, I actually did not know for a time how I should behave with all my admiration of Professor L——, feelings of my inferiority and my precious self-love, which would not allow, under any condition, Julie H—— to go—how shall I say it—under her true value. And then—this blessed country house-keeping!—cows and sheep, and eggs and butter and milk, and so on, and a deluge of small things—and then mamma, who was so uneasy, and would help me ; but now, by degrees, everything is come, for all that, into wonderful order. The little god with arrow and bow helped me. My good L—— is, I fancy, more solicitous to please me than I him—yes, he was and is, God be thanked, properly in love with me. After I saw this, there was no need—I took courage. Cows, calves, and hens thrive ; under the great kettle of the house-keeping there was a

brisk fire,—and mamma was easy, thank God. And my husband—of course he was pleased, because I was pleased with him.

Beata, do you know what I pray for, morning and evening—yes, every hour—with all the fervency of my heart?—"O God, make me worthy of my husband's love. Give me ability to make him happy!" And I have received much ability—for he is (so he says and seems) very happy; if you knew how fresh he looks—how gay! It is because, do you see, I look after him; he does not look any longer so shabby as formerly; and then—he does not sit up at night; that he has left off. And nevertheless he thinks and writes (as he himself confesses) more freely and more powerfully than formerly. Besides this, I take good care not to disturb or trouble him when he is in his study, writing and reading. Oh!—when I wish very much to see him for a moment (he is, after all, handsome, Beata!), I steal softly in, play him some little trick, lay a flower in his book, or kiss his forehead, or such like, and then go quite softly out, and receive, when I turn myself round to shut the door, always a glance, which follows me as it were secretly.

For the rest I endeavour to form myself into a right estimable clergyman's wife. I wish people to call L——'s wife a pattern for all the wives of his congregation. Don't imagine that with all this I forget, or neglect, my little outer man: oh no! I take counsel very often in the glass, but do you know which glass I most frequently consult? Ay, that which I see in L——'s eyes—it is so charming to see oneself *en beau*.

Oh Beata! how much more noble it is to be united to a person whom one highly esteems and honours, and who is, at the same time, so good! As Arvid's wife, what a nonentity I should have remained, what a life of nothingness I should have led! Now I feel with inward joy that every day I ascend higher in my own esteem, and that of my husband. It is a happy feeling—to ascend.

Do you know that Arvid is married—has been so for three months. His wife, Eleonora D——, always looks very wide awake—and he looks—one may say—almost obliged to be cheerful. I fear that his good rest is a little disturbed. Poor Arvid! The young couple in the mean time give mag-

nificent feasts and entertainments. Old Mr. P—— (certainly intentionally) almost every day drives past here with his “swans” and his daughter-in-law in the handsome landau, and drives quite slowly, as if he fancied he was driving the funeral procession of my good luck;—but I feed my ducks with joy and with a heart free from care; nod kindly to Eleonora, and thank the Eternal Goodness for my lot.

It is Saturday evening. I expect my husband home. In the arbour outside my window I have set out our little supper table; asparagus from our garden, beautiful raspberries and milk—L——’s favourite dishes—complete our supper. The angelic Hermina Linnæa decorates at the moment the table with flowers. How lovely she is, how good she is, how indescribably amiable no one can imagine! She has almost supplanted us with our parents—and yet one forgives her so willingly. Ah! brother Carl! thou hast found a beautiful pearl. He will soon leave the shores of the Mediterranean, to find again in his beloved North his life’s pearl, and to shut it up in the muscle-shell of marriage. Ha! how did I hit upon that narrow simile? Yet it must stand. If the sun of love only beams into the mother-of-pearl habitation it will float forth upon life’s stream, a little island of bliss. Carl writes home such amusing and interesting letters. His soul is like a museum, among whose jewels Hermina will live. Thus, indeed, of a truth, like a pearl in gold. Do you know what happened to Carl before he left us? One fine evening he went to sleep—a Cornet, and woke—a Lieutenant! Was it not charming?

To-morrow my beloved parents and sisters come here to dinner. It will be a happy day.

I have told you how happy I am, and yet I cherish now one wish and one right vividly, the fulfilment of which will complete the measure of my happiness. My good friend, there is in our house one little room, pretty and comfortably papered with green, and with white curtains (precisely such as you like), looking out on meadows where fat cows, which give the most beautiful milk, graze pleasantly; in the room is a book-case, a—yet it is so tiresome to describe!—come and see it, and if it please you, and you think you can be at home with your entertainers—then—call it yours. My good friend, come to us—come. Now I hear L—— coming at a distance.

He comes into my room. I shall pretend that I neither see nor hear him. One must not spoil these men, and make them fancy that one listens to their steps. Yes—cough—embrace me—I shall not stir, nor drop my pen. One must not always submit; one must not spoil his——

(*L—— writes*)

wife; and therefore Julie *must* give me the pen, and, sitting upon my knee, see me write that, for which she will inwardly be sorry.

Our good friend, Beata, come to us. We expect you with open arms. In our home you will find yourself well off. Come and see how I hold Julie in check. In order to give you a proof of this, she shall not, spite of her zeal, write one word more to-day.

I will wri—

14th of August.

I cry, I laugh, I am beside myself—and yet I must write. Do you know who is here?—who is just come? Guess, guess! Ah, I have not time to let you guess. Emilia is here, my sister Emilia! Emilia the good, Emilia the gay, Emilia the handsome—the happy Emilia! And Algernon is here, and the little Algernon—the most magnificent little boy on the earth! Mamma dances with him, papa dances with him, Emilia dances, Algernon dances, L—— dances. Wait, wait, I will come and sing, and cannot write a word more, so sure as I am called.

JULIE.

P.S.—Beata, come back to us!

Prays

THE H—— FAMILY.

Amiable and happy family, I thank you; but Beata will not come. I shall write this answer to-morrow. Innocent children, who slumber around me, I shall remain with you, because I can be useful to you. Happiness resigned often gives contentedness of a higher kind—it gives *peace*. Oh might I only know *that*—whilst every day's quiet billows uniformly, but silently, bear me onward and towards that silent shore—and every day will be blessed.

Nightly mists rise up from the meadows announcing the morning, and admonish me to rest. Around the hillock of my life ascends also a cold mist. If it come nearer, I will write at once, and take leave of the H—— Family.

A NOTE TO THE PUBLIC.

COURTEOUS PUBLIC,

A book is a traveller who betakes himself into the world, and is commonly provided with a letter of recommendation, either in the form of a Preface, in which the Author modestly steps forward, and prays to find acceptance; or in a Postscript, by which the Author recommends himself. If the book be its own letter of recommendation, it is indeed the very best of all. In the very easily comprehensible anxiety that it may not be the case here, one hastens, first of all, to send in a little note, which may, in the warmest manner, recommend to the considerate kindness of the public this little book, and, at the same time, its little

AUTHORESS.

AXEL AND ANNA:

OR,

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TWO LOVERS.*

AXEL TO ANNA.

FROM henceforth let the February storm roar at my windows, destroy them, burst into my chamber, and cover me, and everything that is to be found there, with his ice-mantle; henceforth let my uncle thunder and curse, let the maids scold, the dogs howl, the parrots scream. In my heart is spring—the world is an Eden, human beings are angels; and I am happy. Anna loves me! Oh tell it me once again! Is it then really true—is it possible? Anna, do you love me?

ANNA TO AXEL.

I was yesterday at a ball—I danced—heard compliments—nothing pleased me. Wherefore? Axel was not there! Is not this an answer to your question, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

WITH A ROSE.

Take the Rose! In it so fair
Is thy charming visage beaming;
In the rose's crimson gleaming
Shines love's image also there.
Yet I would not see displayed,
Type of our love in it either;
Roses fade away and wither,
But our love will never fade.
From the days of Adam even,
Were they different from each other;
Earth is but the rose's mother,
Love, it is the child of heaven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

The rose is placed in water, your poem rests on my heart; and yet I am not content. What then does this heart de-

* The original title is literally "Correspondence between two Stories;" which, however, conveys no idea to an English reader. The Swedes, like most of the continental nations and the Scotch, live several families in one house, each occupying a story, or suite of apartments. These lovers, as will be seen, lived thus, and carried on their correspondence from different stories of the same house.

sire? To-day it is five days since I have seen you. If you could only persuade your uncle to call upon us—but I know that is impossible. Therefore, peace, peace, spirit of disquiet!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Oh that I could cause an earthquake, so that the two stories should fall together—that I could stamp the floor through, and suddenly descend to where my thoughts and feelings always dwell! These, Anna, are simple possibilities in comparison with the impossibility of making the wilful old man move one step. I have stood a whole hour arguing with him. One must live *with* the world, whilst one lives *in* the world.—“No!” “Uncle, you look rather unwell?” “No!” “Uncle, you must take some relaxation.” “No!” “Talk politics with lively neighbours.” “No!” “Uncle, you become a hermit.” “No!” “Dear Uncle.” “No!” “My dear, best Uncle.” “No, and no, and no!”

After considering this chain of denials, which is more insurmountable than the Alps or Pyrenees, I proposed to myself several questions. “Wilt thou fall into a consumption from shere longing?” “No!” “Or the jaundice, from pure vexation?” “No; at least not in this instance.” “Wilt thou make thyself happy?” “Yes.” “See Anna?” “Yes.” “Make the essay now?” “Yes.”—Hurrah!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Did not succeed. Closed doors. Your aunt has a cold—receives no visit. But now I *will* and *shall* see you. I know what I will do. I will go and place myself in the street, directly opposite your window. And should you not come to the window, I will stand there until I turn to stone.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, in the rain? That I forbid. Do you not see that the rain pours down in streams from heaven.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Wet as a sea-god, but happy as—as myself (there is no happier one), I sit again in my room and write to you upon a thick pile of paper, which I should copy for my uncle. But now I am content with all. I have seen you. I find everything beautiful—even my uncle’s style. How charming you are, Anna! You have really more than one point of resemblance with the Crown Princess, without which, now, no

one can be pretty. She has large, heavenly blue eyes. Yours are certainly smaller, but equally heavenly. Truly she has *dark-brown* hair, and you *light-brown*; but the form of the little head—of the bewitching little head—is completely the same; and when I only think of your little nose—like hers, so fine, small, and enchanting—oh I fall into ecstasy!

ANNA TO AXEL.

But I am *not* in ecstasy, I am not charmed; I am dissatisfied, anxious. You have certainly taken cold; you will have a cold in the head—catarrh—fever—will perhaps die! To stand a whole hour in the cold and heavy rain! Axel, I cannot pardon you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

We come to-day, towards evening, to call upon you—we come to call, my most dear uncle, and his most obedient nephew. God bless the old man for his heavenly idea! Only take care that the door of the drawing-room be not locked—that we can, unobserved, enter so far that we are not met with the eternal untruth, that “The family is not at home.”

Cold in the head—catarrh! Yes, I sneeze and cough—but only from impatience. I have fever—but it is a fever of joy.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I could die from vexation. Did not Mr. P——, the eternal, unbearable Mr. P——, step in at the door just as we would go out? My uncle turns back; I gnash my teeth. Mr. P—— seats himself. I double my fist. “We would just pay a visit,” I began (God knows in what tone). “We must——” “We must put that out of our minds,” said the uncle, interrupting the words of the nephew; “we can call another time.” I banged the door to, with such violence that Mr. P—— started up from his chair.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Recipe for a Cold and Fever.

Drink three glasses of cold water, one after the other. N.B.—Only one every quarter of an hour. Between each walk three times up and down the room. N.B.—Only one step is made in a minute; and at every step repeat—

Be pious and good,
Be patient of mood.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A bad cure; does no good. I have thought of one for myself. Send me a lock of hair; only one, a single one from among the hundred which you have; only one—a single one. I will press it to my lips, to my forehead, my eyes, or my heart. Oh do not refuse it me! Otherwise I shall fall most seriously ill. A lock of hair, good Anna, a single one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*An hour later.*

A curl! Can you really be so cruel, and refuse it me? See, I lie on my knees and pray for it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*Half an hour later.*

A curl, a curl, a curl!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*A quarter of an hour later.*

I beg most humbly pardon for being thus often troublesome. This time shall certainly be the last; if not—shall I have a curl, or not?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, you have it—bad, impatient man! I subjoin a small fragment of a conversation which was held between my aunt and me, by the light of two sleepy, pale candle-flames.

AUNT.—Men are tyrants.

I.—Yes, truly, that they are.

AUNT.—Despots who, by flatteries or by power, accomplish their wishes.

I.—Yes, yes; alas, it is so!

AUNT.—Never marry, my child.

I.—No; God forbid, dear aunt.

Sleep well, Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Command me, Anna, to stand six hours in heavy rain just under your window; command me to go six miles for a flower which you wish to have; command me to kneel fourteen days; command me to have all my hair cut off to stuff your pillow; command me at the next ball, after the heart's-waltz, to dance eight times, one after the other, with the full-rigged man-of-war, the dry Mrs. N.; command, beau-

tiful tyrant! I obey. Command me, above all, that I come up every evening to snuff your candle. Its weak flame seems to exercise a darkening influence upon the otherwise clear lights of your understanding.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I command you to-day, between twelve or one o'clock, to stand in the doorway, or to walk up and down before the house. You can then greet us, and see my beautiful new bonnet, which my cousin, Lieutenant Emil Papperto, has assured me is very becoming to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

The bonnet suits you very ill. The crown is too large, the poke too small. Your face looks in it as large and round as the full moon. I beg you to make Lieutenant Papperto a present of the bonnet, and for his good taste let him wear it himself.

If you will step this afternoon to the window you shall see me ride past on my new horse, my beautiful Hercules, which I received yesterday as a present from my uncle. I am very well satisfied with the horse, since the five charming Miss Mullitons assured me (when I waited upon them this morning) that they had never seen such a beautiful animal.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If the beauty of a horse consists in having thick legs, a thick neck, a large head, large ears, and in galloping like a cow, Hercules is certainly unusually beautiful, quite unusually beautiful! If my advice may be followed, I would beg Mr. Axel W. to make the five charming Miss Mullitons a present of the horse, and for their good taste let them make use of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. were somewhat gentler, and less caustic, it would be far more becoming.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Mr. Axel W. think of paying a visit on the story below him, I must inform him herewith that the family is not at home.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. believed Mr. Axel W. had any such intention, I must herewith inform her that she was mistaken.

AXEL TO ANNA. [*Two days later.*]

Anna's name-day! I have ridden six miles to-day in the

early morning to fetch out of the Baron R.'s hothouse this bouquet, which Anna, I hope, will not be so cruel as to scorn.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I hope that you have received the bouquet. It was certainly not particularly beautiful; but in this season flowers are difficult to get.

AXEL TO ANNA.

For three nights I have not closed my eyes. I really believe that animal Hercules, which I have ridden several days, shakes me too much. To-day I have spoken with Franz Kunninger, and he will take the creature off my hands, although perhaps for only half the sum he cost. But I do not trouble myself about that if I can only get rid of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel! I have thrown my new bonnet into the fire. I think my aunt would receive a visit this evening, if any one came; that is to say, if a certain old gentleman came— young ones she cannot endure. Yet I am of the opinion, that a certain young gentleman, who should steal in behind the back of a certain old one, would produce no bad effect.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel-girl, what a fortunate concurrence of circumstances! Your aunt receives visits this evening, and my excellent uncle wishes this evening to pay visits. He brushes the dust off himself with such zeal, that I could kiss him for it.

He has fully determined that the acquaintance shall commence to-day, since he has remarked that his servant is paying court to your aunt's housemaid, and to this he says he will put an end.

I have given the old gentleman various rules for behaviour. I have told him that now gentlemen kiss the hands of the ladies. He answered that this was a stupid fashion; *I* find it full of spirit. Oh Anna! thus I can once more kiss your hand,—your hand,—oh joy!

Should Mr. P—— come now I will strike him dead.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I would give millions of years for an evening such as that of yesterday.

Anna, you looked like an angel with your beautiful hair and white dress—and a good angel were you to me, you made me the happiest of those beings who breathe the air of this earth. How happy am I, and how happy must you be,—you who have made me so happy! Oh good God, what heavenly moments may be enjoyed on this earth against which one rails so much! My uncle and your aunt did not dream that whilst they on the sofa by lamp-light were working to dissolve one engagement, we in the twilight at the window closed another. I am like another man since I feel your ring on my finger. Anna, mine! My Anna! Oh what a good and noble being must I now become!

AXEL TO ANNA.

How clear is the heaven, how fresh the air! I must breathe fresh air, my happiness oppressed me. I went out, almost danced through the city, sung aloud, behaved in such a manner that every one stared at me, and I had the desire to embrace every one. In my breast is a happiness which could make happy half a world. Anna, how I love you!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I also am unspeakably happy. Men love more passionately; but whether better, whether truer—Axel—that we shall perhaps experience in ourselves. I also feel myself better and nobler. I will become good, gentle, true,—in one word, a really amiable wife, and make Axel happy. Upon this I now think, whether I walk, stand, sit; whether I sew, play, sing, or read; and that causes nothing to be either done well, or at the right time. “What is the matter with thee, girl?” demanded my aunt a short time since; “I think thou hast a fever, thy eyes sparkle so—dost thou feel headache?” “On the contrary, I feel something at my heart,” answered I. “I must take immediately a good dose of Hoffmann’s drops.” Thou laughest? I also.

AXEL TO ANNA.

“What is come to thee, boy, why art thou so absent?” asked my uncle yesterday. “Wilt thou write so? The paper upside down, the pen upside down? Boy, I believe thou art quite upside down thyself!” “Ah, uncle—have you ever been in love?” “In love, boy? Yes; but then I thought also of marrying.” “Yes, I also think of doing so.” “Also of doing so? When one has nothing to live upon? Has ever such a thing been heard? Let us see; thou hast

monthly thirty-six shillings from me ; out of this thou wilt spend twelve shillings to hold thy wedding ; twelve shillings to commence thy housekeeping ; there yet remains to thee twelve shillings and God's mercy to live upon the remainder of thy life. Nay, I congratulate thee. Sunshine for dinner, and moonshine for supper ; see, one shall get quite fat upon it !"

Wretched, when people to whom nature has denied every kind of judgment will be witty ! Wretched that it should just occur to him to speak of his thirty-six *shillings* !

ANNA TO AXEL.

Did you see the poor woman with the children in the street just opposite ? How miserable they were ! I cannot help them, I have nothing now ; but you ?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Just now I received the money for Hercules, and more than I expected. For what do I want a horse ? I can walk. I hasten.

AXEL TO ANNA. [A day later.

They are assisted ; not alone for the moment, I hope, but for ever. They have a dwelling, clothes, food, work. They can and will work. I do not speak of their joy ; in its excess, it almost resembled sorrow. I prayed her to bless you. I am most sincerely happy.

ANNA TO AXEL.

A basketful of flowers and fruit, and undermost, five rows of Roman pearls, was brought me this morning by a little unknown girl. From whom she did not know—she had only received the command to deliver it to me. Axel, it is from you—that I know ! Axel, Axel, such presents from you, who have little for yourself ! I cannot receive it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If you will cause me a bilious fever, you will say no. Good Anna, that you accept these trifles is my recompense—(mine, do you hear)—for wandering about the whole day, more like a beast than a man, out of pure philanthropy, without enjoying a single mouthful as big as a pin's head ; and for ultimately being obliged, at supper, to listen to a severe curtain-lecture from my uncle.

Regarding my finances, be quite easy. And the money for Hercules—should that, perhaps, lie by unused ? I have

money remaining. I can establish myself, my gracious lady.

ANNA TO AXEL.

In order to preserve you from a bilious fever, I will certainly accept this time your gift. But make me no more, I pray you ; and at least, not again so soon.

AXEL TO ANNA.

When will that time, that happy time come, when I shall have the right to give you everything, and you no longer have the right to refuse? When will the time come when I shall no longer require the pen as the interpreter of my feelings? When shall I speak with you—when dare to see you?

This is for me the Gordian-knot which I in vain strive to unloose. I have the greatest desire to do like Alexander, and at one stroke to cut it through by carrying you off. After many fruitless attempts, I have perceived the impossibility of coming to you by any usual and natural means. Now I have the most desperate designs in my head. You have certainly heard speak of the ingenious man, who, in order to embrace his mistress, set her house on fire. What do you think of him?

ANNA TO AXEL.

That he was, is, and remains, an incendiary ; and of such a one I entertain the greatest horror.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To place a ladder at a window, and, upon the wings of love, float up and in at the window, is and looks so strangely thief-like. But Anna, to make a visit in a balloon has never, I believe, taken place since the time of that Turk who, according to the Persian legend, thus visited his fair one under the name of Mahomet. This would not be an impossibility ; and I see possibilities in everything, except in being longer able to live without seeing you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

To all heathenish visitors, let them enter even by ladders or in balloons, I am not at home. I declare that such a one I will not know, much less love.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you never show yourself at the window—why never go out—why is a call never accepted? Why do you

shut yourself up thus wilfully, thus eternally? Does this happen on my account?

ANNA TO AXEL.

My best Axel, my aunt is very ill—you know this. I dare not leave her a moment. I steal away to write to you with the greatest difficulty; and beg you, for God's sake, neither set our house on fire nor break my windows. Do you think that, among phials of drops and recipes, I am particularly comfortable? But the only thing I can do, the only thing also which you must do, is to be quiet, and await the proper time.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To be quiet! You might as well say this to the storm which now rages till the whole house trembles. I could wish that it would overturn it, if it, with a breath from the spirit of love, would cast you into my arms. Anna, what I now say, you must not take so literally. I wrestle with Fate and will bring her to yield, let this cost what it will.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Human beings have, after all, neither leopards' nor tigers' hearts in their breasts, my Anna! Do you not believe, that if we were to disclose our love to our relatives they would allow us now and then to see each other? Anna, you are my sun, the light of my eyes. If you hide yourself longer, all around me will become pitch-dark.

Shall we dare the experiment? We have so little to lose by it, so much to win. Say yes!

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are right, Axel; we must make the trial. Do you speak first to your uncle; and when I have heard what he has said, I shall have more courage to reveal myself to my aunt. She is now somewhat better.

AXEL TO ANNA.

"Speak to your uncle;" this is uncommonly easily said—but *done*, that is something quite different. Do you know, my uncle is a man who has quite a peculiar humour, and above all, peculiar eyes. With these he can fix a person who is going to say something that does not please him, in such a manner that the word remains sticking in the poor fellow's throat to all eternity; and then such a tempest rises as can certainly be compared with none in Sweden, but only

with those hurricanes which rage in the West-Indian islands. In the mean while I will prepare for myself a garment out of Job's patience and Solomon's wisdom, and dare the attempt.

ANNA TO AXEL.

No, no; be cautious! If you believe that it will displease him so much, and you have not courage enough, it is the best that we drive the whole attempt out of our minds.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Also quite easily said. But before I give up a resolution which I have once taken, may hurricanes, ten times more raging than the one which I will now brave, tear me into a thousand pieces, and blow them to all parts of the world. Farewell; I am now armed for the fight, and—I go!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, Axel, wait! Ah, my dear friend, I fear this is a precipitate step. It is possible they may not consent in the least. Besides, we are both of us still so young.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I am in my twenty-second year, already last autumn I was one-and-twenty, therefore I am of age. You are turned seventeen.

ANNA TO AXEL.

That is true—and perhaps we are old enough. But ah, Axel, this is the least! I see a thousand impossibilities before us. It is possible our relatives will not on any account give their consent to our union. We really have nothing, my friend! You have no situation, no money; I equally am entirely without fortune. It would be—it is, really foolish with such narrow circumstances to wish to marry. Let us wait, my friend, and well consider, before we risk a step which I now begin to fear might separate us for ever.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I will soon procure a situation for myself.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, therefore, until then.

AXEL TO ANNA.

As you command. I must admire your patience and prudence.

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are not angry.

AXEL TO ANNA.—Yes.

ANNA TO AXEL.—Wherefore; best Axel, wherefore?

AXEL TO ANNA.—Ah, nonsense!

ANNA TO AXEL.—Axel, you really grieve me extremely.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Do not detain yourself, young lady, by writing unmeaning words. Lieutenant Papperto might become impatient. I saw him more than half an hour since go up to you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Lieutenant Emil Papperto will make a call upon my aunt, and she will receive him, I cannot turn him out. My good Axel, be quiet!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ah, what! Be quiet! I do not shoot myself, neither drown, hang, nor poison myself. Oh, I am quiet—quiet and calm like you; I only think what waistcoat, whether a red or a green one, would best suit the physiognomy of a fortunate wooer. I grant that Nature has not given me a red and white porcelain face like Lieutenant Papperto, and ladies whom such a one pleases must think a brown and severe one less handsome. But fortunately there are people who can like a countenance of this kind very much. I will now go to the Mullitons; Betty Mulliton is really a most lovely girl.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I congratulate you. If you have not yet decided regarding the waistcoat, I pray you to make use of the one contained in this packet, which I have embroidered for you, or rather have bought for you, since every stitch has cost a second of my night's rest. I think that it will be very becoming to a brown and severe countenance. My love to Betty Mulliton!

ANNA TO AXEL.

For the love of God, Axel, what has happened? You have been bled! You are ill! I also am almost ill through uneasiness. Axel, Axel, how wild and imprudent you are!

AXEL TO ANNA.

In somewhat cooler blood, and in a somewhat quieter mood, I hasten to say to you a word which vainly in my childhood they endeavoured by cudgelling to wrest from my lips;—a word, to escape which I have in later times fought a duel, and which to pronounce at thy feet, my Anna, my angel of goodness and patience, I now yearn;—PARDON, O PARDON!

ANNA TO AXEL.

The Doctor, I hear, has forbidden conversation and has ordered you, for several days, silence and rest. Be obedient, my best Axel, and show in this way that you love me.

Do not think about anything unpleasant. I make myself your invisible sick-nurse. I come and seat myself upon your bed, in my white dress, and with my fair curls, just as I pleased you so much lately. You may not look at me; I draw the green curtains. You must sleep, and there will I sing a little cradle-song. Listen—or, rather, do not listen, but sleep!

"Young Axle is beloved by me,"
Anna sighed, and sung this ditty,
Thinking, "He is, what a pity!
Eaten up by jealousy!"

"If, as bridegroom, thus he can
Be so stern, so crooked-pated,
How, when once together mated,
Shall we act as wife and man?"

"Shall we say, all day, in strife,
'Wicked Axel!' 'Truthless Anna!'
Ah! 'twixt Axel, then, and Anna,
What an enviable life!"

"Axel, thou to me art dear;
Yet, ere such a life be spending,
Let our love have speedy ending;
Trust me that far better were!"

AXEL TO ANNA.

Axel heard fair Anna's song;
Would not mar its tuneful measure;
True, to hear the song was pleasure;
Yet it was a little long.

And thus sang he: "Should I kind,
Should I gentle be for ever;
Merry jesting were I never
In my heart's warm love to find.

"Who is it, excepting thee,
Could from jealousy defend me,
Ever blessed quiet lend me?
Anna, thou must marry me!"

ANNA TO AXEL.

Anna she heard Axel's song;
How impertinently muttered,
Scarcely can in words be uttered;
Hence 'twill be unanswered long.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Not so, good Anna; not so, but as follows:

This advice pleased Anna well;
She followed it, as reason's plan,
Became good wife to that good man,
And in so doing, won a deal.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Nay, as you will. One dare not contradict invalids. Take now and then a spoonful of this apple-jelly that I have prepared for you and sent. It will do you good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I am melancholy. The birds twitter outside my window, and build themselves nests under the roof. I must lie in bed; my only pleasure is to say rude things to the Doctor, and break his medicine bottles, which have no healing power in them.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Amuse yourself rather with reading this book that I send you; there is a deal that is good and true in it. Often when

I was low spirited, and in a state of mind in which I saw everything black, when all the strings of my soul had become inharmonious, has the reading of a good book again tuned them, and listening to their sweet, ringing harmony, I have thought :

Now heave the foaming billows, now they fall,
 Beneath our boat upon life's stormy flood ;
 Let never gloomy cowardice appal ;
 Let us hope ever ! God is wise and good !
 Even if at times the tempest howleth o'er us,
 And gloomy night encompass us with fear—
 One moment wait !—the tempest flies before us,
 And the still, peaceful heaven smileth clear.
 And green-clad shores, enriched with many a blossom,
 Beckon the sailor o'er the peaceful flood ;
 Thither he steers with thankful throbbing bosom,
 And, filled with joy, says, " God is wise and good !"

AXEL TO ANNA.

That is He, that is He, and you are an angel, Anna ! But the spirit of melancholy has seized upon my soul as well as my body to-day. I think, or rather I beat my brains, now too much to be able to read. A wretched crowd of gloomy black fancies surrounds me in my solitude, like ghosts which have risen up from Tartarus. What will become of you with this penurious and severe aunt, who will not open her doors to young and respectable men ? Are you to sit year after year with her, and, like her, dry up and become hollow-eyed (which would be nothing to wonder at, since you see only her), and catch her cough ? What will become of me with this old uncle, who makes me write out his memoirs and thoughts until my own become quite perplexed ? What, tell me, what ?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Let us become whatever we may, only not unworthy and ungrateful creatures. Axel, you must never again speak of my aunt in this tone ; she has her less amiable qualities, but she has also her good ones ; and besides, I know, intends me so much good. Sooner than make her infirmities of age ridiculous, I would have them myself. Your uncle, as you yourself have told me, has shown you a deal of kindness.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Oh, they are both, without doubt, angels, true angels of light, who, however, let us sit in utter darkness. I am ill, and out of spirits.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I am so happy to-day. I have such good hopes. Whence

and wherefore? Listen! I was yesterday in the church. The air was cold, the wind raged, my aunt would not let me go. I entreated and entreated, until the "No, my dear child!" changed itself into a "Nay, go then, thou self-willed thing!" which sounded most harmoniously to my ear.

For whom I prayed most fervently in the church you will be able easily to guess. I prayed from the most secret recesses of my heart, as confidently as a child may implore an All-good Father. As I, in deep devotion, rose up with the congregation to sing the heavenly hallelujah, a sunbeam, clear and wonderful, streamed through the church-window, and illuminated Westin's* glorious altar-piece. The angels of Faith, Hope, and Charity, who kneel around the grave of the already ascended One, stood forth at once so living, so supernaturally true, that it seemed as though they opened their lips and joined in our song of praise. In my heart arose powerful and inward conviction, that all will yet be well! and with indescribable emotion I bowed myself to receive for us both the solemn blessing. Axel, all will yet be well!

AXEL TO ANNA.

On your account, my Anna, sweet angel, and through you, shall I become blest.

I also to-day have in my soul only joyful feelings, lovely hopes, old, good, and to me most heartily welcome acquaintance. I was up and sate at the window; I have tasted your excellent apple-jelly, and saw how the clear March sun melted the icicles which the cold night had laid upon our neighbour's copper roof. Upon this, I philosophised somewhat in this strain: as the light and warmth of heaven make the ice-veil of night to disappear, the rays of a better fortune will also break through the powerful frost-mist which dims the perspective of our happiness. I gazed so long and so full of presentiment at the sun's activity, until I at length fancied I saw clearly in one of the figures which the victorious, piercing sunbeams formed in the unresisting ice, the ridge and form of my own nose. Somewhat farther on, close to the side of the chimney, I recognised with delight the form of your white, softly-rounded forehead, which seemed modestly desirous of withdrawing itself from the kisses of the sun. Oh, Anna! I must show you one of these days how lovely this looked—I must represent the sun.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I assure you that I am not at all curious. You have then

* A distinguished Swedish painter.

got up! How I rejoice at it! The most unpleasant thing may happen to me to-day (if it only does not concern you), and I shall laugh at it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Do you know at what I laugh? At myself, my angel. I have such good hopes and presentiments, that I should find it quite natural if now a good friend should suddenly step in, and say to me, "Axel, thou art become an excessively rich man." I believe also that I should not be astonished if suddenly little Cupids should sail in at the window, bringing a poor lover a talisman, by which he could command all the gifts of fortune; neither should I open my mouth very wide, if suddenly the ceiling of my room were to open, in order to let a shower of gold stream in! Everything seems to me possible to-day, nothing would surprise me. I have opened my door and window to welcome my visitors; and whilst I wander smiling up and down my chamber, I now and then cast a glance up towards the ceiling.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Curs—draught! I beg pardon; but I am in a very bad humour. I have been obliged to close doors and windows. I became numb and stiff in all my limbs from this cold and draught. No one came. And instead of raising my looks towards the ceiling I have carefully examined the floor; so that after a careful examination I can assure you that he who laid it down must have been an arch bungler, for not one deal is like another, either in height or width. I must now go out and breathe the fresh air. I am well, and will be well, let my uncle and doctor say what they will.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, Anna! my Anna, my Anna! good Anna, excellent Anna, angel Anna! Anna, my Anna, my bride, my wife, sing, leap, shout Victoria!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, incomprehensible Axel! what is the matter with thee? What has happened?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have a post—I have a post! He came, the excellent friend, through the door—the angel from heaven. I had almost knocked him down as I went out. Oh, what a friend! He it is who has resigned to me the situation with its accompanying salary, which has been offered to him, because he had no need of it. He is rich, he has made me also rich. Oh,

show me a mortal who is happier than I! A lover whose—yet still perhaps—if he were already married. But that also in a short time I will become—if you will, my Anna—Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Good Axel, is it possible? Is it then really true? I can scarcely believe it. Axel, my dear friend, shall we really become happy?

AXEL TO ANNA.

We shall. My whole life shall be consecrated to your happiness; and your happiness will always, as now, be mine. We can now marry when it is agreeable to us. I have a respectable situation; the salary is certainly not large, but our wants will be small. The comfortable things of life are mostly only for old people, who are no longer able to enjoy the happiness of the heart—when one can no longer love and be beloved. Nay, why then it may, perhaps, be the best to sleep and dream on a soft couch, that one is happy. We, my Anna, who may pluck in the May of life its most beautiful flowers, we will waking enjoy our felicity, and be happy, even were we poor; yes, even were we obliged to do without everything. Do you remember with what emotion we once read near Medevi, of that married pair, who, after living together five-and-twenty years, felt themselves so unspeakably happy? Oh, my Anna, do you yet remember this?

ANNA TO AXEL.—In truth, my best Axel—no.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Accompanied by a friend, Mr. L—— and his wife wandered through a wood. Here they encountered some gipsies, who were in great misery. L——'s friend pitied these poor creatures, who are exposed to all the physical calamities of nature. "Well," said Mr. L——, "if in order to pass my life with her (his wife), I must have subjected myself to a condition such as this, I would have gone about begging these thirty years, and we should still have been very happy!"

"Ah, yes!" cried his wife; "even *then* we should have been the happiest of human beings."

What words, my Anna, what words! They were spoken under England's heaven. Let us become worthy to speak them, one day, under Sweden's heaven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

For heaven's sake, best Axel. You do not mean? I do not rightly understand at what you aim. Yet I must confess

to you, that to me, suffering, hunger, shivering, and begging, appear less attractive. What do you really mean? A gipsy I will never become: that I tell you, were it only on account of the frightful complexion.

AXEL TO ANNA.

That is not necessary. Nothing shall prevent my wife being white, as well in her complexion as her clothes.

Oh, my beloved Anna, do not overthrow my temple of happiness with your cold, calculating, worldly, and trifling spirit. Let us become happy, not for others, but for ourselves. If you desire this, we certainly can. My salary certainly is small, as I have already said—and nothing in comparison to that which I should wish to offer you. Three hundred dollars is our yearly income. That is truly little, very little; but your prudent housekeeping, my economy and order, will make every penny a dollar. A man requires really so little, only to live—life is really so short. Who has not much, has not much to care about.

The boat needs but little ballast, but sails lightly and merrily on, now over rising, and now over sinking waves. Let us courageously step in—the wind is favourable—the shores adorned with flowers—the heaven free from clouds—and before us wanders the mild star of love, which lights us as far as the haven. I am now too much excited; later, I will unfold to you my plans.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My good Axel, zephyrs seldom blow on the ocean of life—but very wild storms. I fear greatly that, at the first gust of wind, the boat, without ballast, might be upset.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If one is fearful and cowardly—yes—if one loses one's equilibrium in the slightest gust of wind. But away with similes! They only confuse. I will dash straight into the affair.

I possess (as you know) a small farm near the city. This is small, quite small, and scarcely worth three hundred dollars, but still one could live very well there. A roof over their heads was all that our forefathers desired when they built their homes. And what a hardy, glorious people were they! We are less, and we have more. Two rooms and a kitchen has our little temple of happiness, a blooming potato-field surrounds it, and a garden, where the most beautiful fruit-trees and the most lovely flowers can come forth, changes the whole place into a real paradise. A little hen-house. Anna, I will not pardon you, if you should laugh.

ANNA TO AXEL.—I truly do not laugh, my best Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A little hen-house, I would say, stands close by, and its pretty inhabitants will afford us profit and pleasure.

With regard to the fitting up of the interior—away with the luxury and cursed superfluity which has made my fatherland poor! Away with the false ideas of what is becoming, proper, respectable; despicable prejudices which only repeat, “One should do as others do,” away with you! To you I turn, simple manners, honour of the olden time. Temperance and contentment, the doctrine of our forefathers, be welcome, and rule in my quiet house. A wooden bench appears soft when one is seated upon it at the beloved one’s side; a bowl of milk, one simple dish placed by your hand upon the table, at which a friend, a friend who knows how to prize what is offered by sincere hearts, will not refuse to take his place—oh, what a meal! Kings, emperors, invite me into your golden halls! Proud and disdainfully will Anna’s happy husband answer, “No.” Oh, my sweet Anna, how quickly, how joyously, must our days pass away in this little earthly paradise! Hand in hand we wander through life, and die at length so sweetly in each other’s arms! But pardon, I will not distress you—do not weep, my Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.—I will certainly not weep, my best Axel!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Our clothes shall be simple, like our food, like our whole life. You must be always clothed in *white*, for then you are like an angel. The garden I attend to myself, dig, weed, plant, and water, with your assistance, on the days when I am not occupied in the city. In the house, disposes and commands, with absolute sway, my ever industrious and circumspect little wife. When I return from my labour in the fields, or out of the city, your harp and your voice will transport me into heaven, or we eat together a simple meal which is savoury from our appetite and our gaiety. For the evenings, when the great world seeks, yawning, for pleasure where it never yet was found, at suppers, where one goes through a course of moral hungering, or at balls, where one dances as though for wages—in the evenings we will read together, Tegnér’s poems, Cooper’s and Walter Scott’s romances, and enjoy, whilst we ennoble our hearts, all the pleasure which genius can afford the soul and the heart. But we must go to the theatre sometimes, to see Almlöf

plays ; we must rather neglect eating and drinking than neglect them. Thus we shall often go there. But you must have a maid-servant, that is true, for you must not burn your face and hands at the hearth. Besides, when I am at home, you must be always near me. Oh, Anna, say, shall we not be unspeakably happy ?

ANNA TO AXEL.

I hope so, certainly, my dear friend ; but whether precisely in the manner which you have imagined to yourself I know not ; I fear that you are precisely the one who is not fitted for such a simple shepherd's life ; besides, this is put together in a strange manner. Do you yet know, what you once told me, how much pocket-money your uncle gave you yearly ?

AXEL TO ANNA.

The dev—— (I do not curse). I now remember. Full three hundred dollars—exactly as much as my future salary amounts to—and this was, by the end of the year, entirely gone. But, angel Anna, when I am once married, you shall see something quite different ; then I will become supernaturally economical ; I will look at every heller.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Very pleasant for your wife ! Willingly, best Axel, will I also look at every heller, and be as economical as possible ; but with all this, I fear that, if we follow your plans, we shall become ever and ever more like the gipsy pair. Have you considered that you drink three cups of coffee every morning ? And when you were with us one evening, I saw that to three cups of tea you did not despise quite a profuse supply of tea-bread and rusks.

AXEL TO ANNA.

From this day forth, I will eat oatmeal-porridge every morning and every evening, drink egg-beer, and soak brown bread in it, if you think the other too dear. You are right. Besides, as a patriot, one must renounce all articles which are not produced by our fatherland.

Agreed, Anna ; we eat for a year, from this month forth, every morning, a dish of oatmeal-porridge—every evening a cup of egg-beer, in our own little paradise. Besides, this is far more advantageous for the complexion and health than all the cursed tea and coffee drinking. And should it taste even like Peruvian-bark and rhubarb—

When Hebe Anna fills the cup,
Axel, as nectar, will drink it up.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oatmeal-porridge I can only swallow with difficulty; and egg-beer is, once for all, very disagreeable to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Who fears to share with me a dish of oatmeal-porridge despises surely (and this I have observed well from the beginning) the little which I have besides to offer—my heart, my hand. It is true this is very little. The fool! who could be so bold and believe—but I begin to see my errors.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If I do not exactly fancy to eat oatmeal-porridge and egg-beer, that does not prevent me, morning and evening, from being able to satisfy myself with a little cold milk instead of coffee and tea. Yes, a cup of cold milk and a morsel of brown bread will taste excellently. This is all that I need.

ANNA TO AXEL.

The little pretty house and the garden (which is to be some time) I find exceedingly agreeable; yet you have, in your tender partiality, conferred upon me a very extensive power of operation. I examine with trembling all the duties which will be imposed upon me in the future; always to be clothed in white, and to dig in the garden—to put in order, to sweep, spin, weave, cook in company with a maid—to play upon the harp and to sing—to care for everything in the house, and to be constantly with you when you are at home (which we will hope will be the greater part of the day)—to feed the fowls, to drive to the theatre, read romances with you—in one word, represent six or seven personages at once. My good Axel, you will truly be forced to have, in future, some forbearance, like many others who demand too much from their wives.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*]

I fear you are vexed, Axel; but this time, my friend, you are certainly somewhat in the wrong. To share in life, sorrow and joy with you, is, as you know, my most intense desire. Only on your account I wish that joy might preponderate; but your picture of the future gives me little hope of this. You look through a smoked, yellow-coloured glass, which shows you the object neither clear nor true. I shall always tell you the truth, Axel.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*]

Meanwhile, were it a possibility, and did your uncle and my aunt give their consent, I would certainly not say "No."

We are really so young, and can work. Only we must strike out of your account this ever-white dress, the music, the play, and the very agreeable and beneficial reading, which, however, in such narrow circumstances, would steal away too much time.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oatmeal-porridge tastes really not so bad, and egg-beer I drank last evening. It does not taste exactly good; but perhaps it is wholesome.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel, good Anna, you shall never either eat or do the least possible thing for which you have not a decided inclination. I should deserve to be condemned to bread and water, if I desired anything else. Do you see, heavenly maiden, that it was not after all, such pure earnest with the wooden bench, the single dish, and the one servant-maid. I have, do you see, speculated upon my uncle. He will certainly for decency's sake, when we help ourselves so excellently, assist us a little. My uncle is very far from being hard-hearted, and besides he is very fond of me, that I know.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt is also sometimes very good, and loves me tenderly in her way I know; she has given me many proofs of this. Possibly she would also do something for us.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, we will speak with our dear relatives; shall we not? We will tell them everything. Should they say "No"—Anna, I have your word; you are already mine before God, and mine you remain, men will not separate us! Yet we must endeavour to move human beings to be human.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Yes, Axel, let us endeavour to soften the hearts of those against whose wishes and commands we neither may nor should act. Yes, let us try this.

AXEL TO ANNA.—Well, to-morrow!

ANNA TO AXEL.—To-morrow!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*A day later.*]

My dear uncle is somewhat cross this morning. The coffee was cold, and the news in the papers was not according to his mind. "The rulers behave stupidly," said he. "I shall take care not to do the same, I must still wait some hours."

ANNA TO AXEL.

My dear aunt is also in an ill-humour. She has mislaid

a piece of money, and broken a bottle of rose-water; but one would believe I had done it. For three hours, at least, I dare not say anything.

AXEL TO ANNA.

The whole forenoon my uncle has thundered politics. Russia and the whole Ottoman empire have alternately come upon the carpet. I have listened with the most unwearying patience, and said "Yes," "No," "All the better, dear uncle," or, "All the worse, dear uncle," just as was in accordance with the old man's ideas. What did this help? He became ever more and more jealous; he turned towards me, seemed to perceive in my person a representative of the Turkish empire, fell in a rage, so that I, in order not to receive blows, like the Sublime Porte, was obliged, in all haste, to make my retreat through the door. I am quite vexed about the lost forenoon.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Five times this forenoon have I opened my mouth to begin my little speech, and five times have I again closed it. To have prayed for anything would certainly have been fruitless. For my aunt sitting there in the corner of her sofa, with closely pressed together lips and severe looks, appeared a living, No! But this afternoon!

AXEL TO ANNA.

The old man is now fast; he shall not again escape. He is taking his afternoon nap. I will take great care that he neither goes out, nor that any one comes in to him, before I have been able to say: "I love Anna; I must have her for my wife, or die!"

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, how my heart beats! My aunt also is taking her afternoon rest! When she wakes I will speak with her. If she is only not too soon wakened for them, her temper is not good—still, Manette! Do not mew so, there is the cream for my coffee; lap and be quiet. Ah! there buzzes a big fly—it will seat itself, perhaps, upon her nose—no—my good angel, send it away! Good, she sleeps quietly. But yet she will wake some time—and I shall speak. I tremble whilst I write.

Axel, how my heart beats! I hear it throb! It is painful! Art thou also in the same state of mind, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

My heart beats, certainly, quicker and more powerfully

than the pendulum of a clock ; but I wish, did it pain me ever so much, that it would beat as roughly as a copper-smith's hammer, so that my excellent uncle, who entirely, and wholly to pain and annoy me keeps sleeping on, might be awakened by it. Nothing is so unbearable as to wait, to live in uncertainty—to hold oneself ready. I have coughed, sung, made a noise before his door,—all in vain ! As often as I listened, I have had the vexation of hearing him snore. Had he not locked himself in, one could have entered easily, blundered over the sofa, or found out some other polite manner of waking the sleeper. But now it is enough to drive one mad. I have the desire to set my curtains on fire, only to bring the fire drum past his windows.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Do not be nonsensical, Axel, commit no folly. My aunt sleeps also, or pretends to do so ; for as often as I have gone over to her and have looked at her, I have seen her opened eyes hastily close themselves. Most certainly she has remarked that I await her waking to say something to her. Does thy uncle still sleep ?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ever and eternally. His long deep breathing draws away the air from me at the same time ; it is just as though I found myself in a vault. Does thy aunt still pretend to be sleeping ?

ANNA TO AXEL.—Still. What shall I do ?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Vexation ! Now he has awoke, and has stolen forth like a mouse which is afraid of the cat. I heard a slight rustle at his door. When I rushed out to see what this was, I heard, quite down below on the stairs, a clip-clap of galosches, which in all haste hurried out of the door. I ran after him, and cried, "Uncle ! uncle ! I have something to say to you !" "To-morrow is also a day !" he answered, without looking back. I am in despair. He has remarked something.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Ah, Axel ! my aunt has feigned sleep until now. It is now late in the evening, the worst time of the day to make confessions to her. Let it then remain as thy uncle said, "To-morrow !" Ah, it seems to me as though I had gained something by this delay.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A day of fruitless, painful waiting,—a sleepless night. See, this is my whole gain ! But to-morrow !

AXEL TO ANNA. [At midnight.

I cannot sleep. Anna, I have dark forebodings—the morrow will bring us no good. I have now no inconsiderable sum of money in my hands. I have sold something. But, however, what has that to do with the affair? Anna, would it—if our—but it will be best to speak about this when fate has decided.

I believe, my best Anna, the midnight hour shows me ghosts. Anna, I feel deeply, that if you do not wander by my side, my whole life will be only a ghost,—that is, a horrible nothing! * * * *

The clock strikes one, Anna. This stroke is our symbol—we also are only one. In the morning hour of life we have united ourselves,—I know that nothing can separate us. Wherefore, then, do I write so seriously? Wherefore am I in such a gloomy mood? * * * *

How slowly pass away the hours of the night! Thinking of you, and writing to you, I endeavour to give wings to the minutes. Now, when every thing around me is so still and peaceful, I hear all the more distinctly the storm within me—I cannot conceive how all can be so still, so silent, so dead. Is not this the world—are not human beings here—do not passions wake in their bosoms? Do I live solitary, and have all the spirits of disquiet which fled from reposing hearts assembled themselves in my breast? My gentle Anna, I feel it is a stormy ocean into which your gentle soul will discharge itself. But then all will attain rest! * *

I have sought after peace—in vain. Separated from you, I shall find it no more. The winged throbbing of the heart—and every throb a sentiment—how the minutes stretch themselves out into eternity! And every thing around me is so peaceful. Listen! the town-clock strikes two—will nothing then awake? Will no pain, no love, no yearning, raise its voice through the night? All is still—I alone wake—yet there calls the watchman; but how carelessly he announces to the world that the judgment comes! * * *

It is morning. The world awakes—I am no longer so solitary. It is day also in my soul,—I am peaceful. The hour is here. It means—now!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I have received what you have written to me last night. Axel, could you believe that you alone were awake? Did you not hear the beating of my heart? Oh how extraordi-

nary, that a mixture of wood, moss, and lime, which is for you a floor and for me a ceiling, should prevent two human hearts from understanding each other! Ah, were this *now* only somewhat farther off—I tremble!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Still I have hope, beloved, adored Anna; still nothing is lost. This morning, whilst my uncle drank his coffee, I took courage, prayed to God; thought, Anna! drew breath, and went in to him. “My best uncle!” I commenced quietly and solemnly. “My best nephew,” answered he, “what shall ‘my best uncle’ do?” “Your goodness—” “Now, what then—my goodness?” “I wish—I have—” “I wish—I have—nay that was really excellent!” (The old man has always had an extremely unpleasant manner of repeating my words, and then they always sound as stupid again.) “Dear uncle—I am in love!” “In love? Yes, that I have easily remarked in the jaundiced complexion which thou hast had this half-year past—this is the colour of love.” “My uncle, the weal or woe of my whole life depends upon one single word. Oh my best uncle, who——” Now came a man, whom I wished at the witch’s mountain, with the papers into the room. “My son,” said my uncle, “come again in a few hours—then we can speak farther with each other. Now I must see how affairs stand between Turkey and Russia.” I was precisely not in the mood to wait. I took the papers, stuck them in my pocket, and said in a firm tone, “First, uncle, you must hear me.” He stuck his fingers in his ears, fixed his eyes upon me like two claws, and cried, “Not one word, not a breath! Give me the papers this moment, or I will never listen to thee again.” I cried, and cried again still louder. At length I must, like a little west-wind, give way to the storm of the north. My uncle became again kind, and I went my way; for he would neither have heard nor understood me, as he had fixed his eyes upon his dear papers. An hour will soon have passed; yet another, and then I go. Oh my Anna, my only one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Turks and Russians, Russians and Turks, what are they and their interests to me? Straw—paper-cuttings; and on their account must I sit here, as in a fiery furnace. Ah!—now, Anna!

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is past! All is lost—not a spark of hope remains—I cannot see what I write.

ANNA TO AXEL.

And for me also—I received a round “No”—and in such hard terms! Oh, Axel! now I feel for the first time how unspeakably I love you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

To humble me! To threaten me! “Ridiculous—nonsensical!” To threaten to turn me out of doors—me—yes, people don’t know me!

ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt will marry me in a short time—but not to you. “This man,” said she, “has his own house, his own equipage, and is besides a respectable man.” I was forced to laugh, Axel. I have said to her—thou, or no one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, let us fly! Let us escape from these tyrants who will murder our happiness! The earth is large, a little corner upon it can certainly be found for us. All human beings are not barbarians. You are mine. I conjure you, I command you, to follow me. To-morrow, more about this. Hold yourself ready. My determination is irresistible. We fly!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, no! This would be wrong. Axel, reflect. Axel, my friend, my beloved, calm yourself, for my sake!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Place yourself this evening, between ten and eleven, at the door which leads into the neighbouring lane. Be quiet. All is ready, I have money. You are under my protection; you go with me; your duty is only to follow me. Between ten and eleven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

No, Axel! It is wrong, it is unwise. We sin against the laws of God and man in order to plunge ourselves in misery. I love you above every thing; but I need not, and will not, follow you when you do not remain upon the good and right path. And were there no other obstacle, this is sufficient for me. My aunt is sickly and old, she has only me. I will not leave her thus. Axel, come to reflection—I pray, I beseech you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is then you, you who will not—who refuse, who break—you, whom I believed mine! Anna, Anna, will you deceive me or yourself? That rich, that estimable man—is it not on his account that you despise me and my poverty? Is he

not at this moment with you—he—this man—this detested Emil? Answer, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I cannot answer to such a question. Axel, I love, I pity you. Axel, be the man who is worthy to be everything to a woman. Be strong for her sake, be pure in thoughts as in wishes. Oh, Axel, my only, my beloved friend, be my support, be a model to me in this difficult hour. Set me an example of submission, not to a stern and blind fate, but to the ordination of an All-wise Father, under whose support we always wander, let things be calm or desperate as they may. Have patience; we are yet indeed so young; let us wait; let us be patient; everything may yet turn to good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

You are very calm, very discreet, very patient, quite satisfied. I understand you—Anna, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

What shall I say to calm you, to make you satisfied? I love you indescribably, Axel; but for that very reason will I be worthy of you. Does a woman, indeed, ever preserve the esteem of a lover who submits blindly to his passion?

Imagine, Axel, that you are some years older than you are (that can appear natural enough when one is unhappy and in suffering, the minutes are then long, and bring experiences as if they were years); imagine that I am your daughter, what would you now say to me? Would you not speak to me admonishingly? Destroy not for the petty felicity of one moment the whole life's happiness of yourself and your friend. Be calm, wait for the time, that is often the only thing, and the most prudent thing, which a person can do. He whom you love so inwardly, so inexpressibly, will sometime do justice to her who would rather suffer for him, through him, than pollute a heart which is consecrated to him and virtue, by an impure thought, an action—a crime against duty.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Not a word from you? My Axel! can you really be dissatisfied with me? Yes, Axel, I am calm—because I am resigned—but happy? ah, that is past!

Will you not say one kind word to me? I need it so much.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, what wild demons must now be raging in your soul! Axel, pray! Do you know at whose word the agi-

tated waves of the sea became calm? "And it was still." Pray to Him!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oh, heavens! I am uneasy beyond all description! Axel, could I only see you for a few minutes! How unhappy you must be! Axel, how culpable you are if you despair, if you for one moment could forget, would forget, that Anna loves you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Do you know, Axel, what a woman's love means? Do you know that which she says in the words—*I love thee*? Listen, Axel! Your life is mine; your virtue, my honour; your sorrow, your joy, are mine; your strength, my support; your courage, my hope—but your fall, your disgrace—my death!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel—Axel—I know it, you have not come home for three nights. I have listened; your foot during these has never trodden that chamber. I saw you yesterday evening from the window; your look was wild; your whole being disturbed; your gait uncertain. Where do you go, Axel? Oh, do not turn from me! Only upon the path of duty and of patience can you find Anna. Axel, Axel, turn back!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, turn back! I cannot, I will not lose you! Listen to me! See, I weep, the tears wet the paper; see these tears—they dim my eyes—my Axel, turn back!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I will cast no reproaches on you—fear not one word, which you would not hear, not one look which you would not wish to see. I am really your friend, your bride—shall be perhaps sometime your wife—Axel, think on that—sometime your wife!

AXEL TO ANNA.—Never—never—never!

ANNA TO AXEL.

On your breast will I lean and pray—for my sake—forgive yourself! Let you have done whatever you may—my Axel—I still love you! Yours I am, yours I remain to be!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Never—never more! I am unworthy of you, Anna! I have forgotten—forgotten all—you—myself—God! I have *gambled*!—Ha, the tempter, the treacherous friend! I have lost everything which I possess—still more than I possess—the property of others. I must fly my country. Do not lean on my breast—a hell is there—do not seize my hand—

it is bloody. Farewell! Die, poor maiden, if you can. I—cannot die!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I had hardened myself against all your love, against all your tenderness—had left your letters unopened. Now I have opened them—in order to allow some fire-drops yet to run on the burning glow of my despair—in order, if possible, to become insane. It became otherwise—now the loving words throng beneficially about my soul, like the evening dew upon the hard, parched earth. Anna, you shall not despair on my account—I myself will not despair. I have erred grievously—I will suffer, and be reconciled. What caused my error? I know not—despair—jealousy—hell!

AXEL TO ANNA.

You will not say a word to me! But, indeed, am I worthy of it? Can, indeed, the pure angel of heaven speak to the son of crime? To-morrow evening I shall set off. A letter will inform my uncle of everything. He will not refuse his forgiveness to his unhappy nephew who has fled his country. *Forgiveness!*—that is the highest for which I can now hope. *Forgiveness!* what a word;—how blessed, to those who are forgiven! I beseech my uncle to disinherit me, and thereby to pay my debts. I fear that he will not do the latter. Anna—in my madness I borrowed a considerable sum from a friend, who is not rich, and has a wife and several little children. He loved me, he trusted me, he gave me all which he possessed; I deceived him—I gambled away his little children's clothes and food. Now, would that I could pay him with my blood! Remorse, thou who with tiger-claws rendest my heart, what good dost thou do him ——?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have erred grievously—have deserved heavy punishment. I will accuse myself before you—I must do it. I knew that I sinned, and sinned nevertheless. It is past, peace is gone—the time is gone when I knew not remorse. In my rage for my losses, I challenged my fortunate opponent. I wounded him dangerously—almost mortally. He was carried home to his mother—to his old mother! He was her darling—her only child,—perhaps she may die,—well for her!

ANNA TO AXEL.—Axel, pray! Let us pray!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I cannot—cannot *now*. I see him—them—the hungry little ones—their deceived father. Oh, what am I become!

Now I am rather better. Pray for me, Anna! I believe in the power of intercession. I am not worthy to pray. You are pure and good. This next night I shall set off! I shall go towards Germany—towards North Germany. I shall try to get a situation; something may turn up for me to do.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My eyes burn—sleep flies them—that is no wonder. If I could only weep! but that is too good for me. I have something upon my heart which burdens, which gnaws it—that is the pang of conscience. Anna, if you would lay your hand upon my breast—but am I really worthy to have this alleviation.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, Axel, take these opium-drops, they will give you rest and sleep. Anna prays for you; Anna weeps for you; Anna loves you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have also a little sister—a suffering child—my father prayed me, upon his deathbed, to take care of her. I add her address; when you can go to her—tell her, that her poor brother—tell her, that he is dead. The ring which I enclose will, if it be sold, suffice for some months to pay for her board. When I can, I will send her more, but through you. Thanks, affectionate, good angel, for that which you have sent up. To-night—in a few hours—I shall set off—away from you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

In two hours I shall set off. Clothes which I have sold have obtained money for my journey. Anna, you have been my guardian-angel. I also have now been able to pray—I am quiet, resigned—I will suffer and conciliate; I will again have hopes of myself. You have not given me up, God will forgive me. I will live, that I may become worthy of this. I must now take leave of you—of you, that is to say, of happiness—and of everything which makes life dear to me. But it is all my own fault. In this solemn moment, when I am about to take a long, perhaps an eternal farewell of you, I will lay open my whole soul before you. What I say to you is the truth, it will be a comfort to you, and will preserve your peace at a time when Axel will be so far removed from you. I believe on God, the Merciful, All-wise and Omnipresent. I am a Christian, according to my belief; that my future actions may testify to this belief, let us both pray—to Him who gives the power! I believe that you, my Anna, love me—and that, wherever my restless existence

may be cast upon the earth, one heart will feel with me, one thought will follow me. The sweet consciousness of the steady presence of an angel! This firm belief will sustainingly unite itself in my heart with the remembrance of my transgression—my crimes—will steel it against temptations, and will form out of me that improved person whom Anna could love.

AXEL TO ANNA. [*Half an hour later.*

I have not yet besought you to forgive me, and yet have done you so much wrong. Axel, weak and violent, was not worthy of you, Anna. Pardon him, however; in *one thing* he was strong—in his love—and this will endure in his breast to his last breath. Forgive him all your tears—see, mine flow—welcome, you companions of misfortune, bathe her feet! Tears of repentance, of love, of pain, and of joy—flow, flow; that which ye can win, is forgiveness! Your lock of hair—may I keep it? I will bear it upon my heart; and a stranger, wandering solitarily about the world, I shall still have something with me that will speak to me of the angel who was mine. *Was* mine—is mine no longer! I have still one word to say—my last word—ah, a heavy word! Anna, you are free! I have no longer a right over your hand. Axel's honour is stained, Anna is free! I return your ring. Now all is at an end!

[*Eleven o'clock.*

The hour is come. I have stood at the window and contemplated the heavens. The stars sparkle brightly—brightly as on that evening—you still remember it? when we exchanged rings, looked up to heaven, and were blessed as angels. The evening star shone then upon us mildly and clearly. Now and then, Anna, when mournful memories of departed hours may not be unwelcome to you, then glance upward to this star, and think on Axel. Often in lonely nights will his glance in joy and sorrow be riveted upon it.

The minutes speed on. God bless you, my Anna, may his angels defend thee! Sweden shall, please God, one day see again a worthier son. Oh my country! may I in the bosom of thy earth, which bore my cradle, find my grave, which Anna will wet with a tear. My youth, my joy, my country, my Anna—ah! all, all—farewell!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, best Axel, do not set off to-night! Do not set off to-night, upon my knees I pray this from you. Remain yet one day—on the following night you may set off, if in the mean time things do not change—I—ah, I dare not give you

hopes, which may be easily deceived ; but perhaps, oh Axel, perhaps we may find means to pay your debts. Delay only this one day, Anna prays you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why delay ?—that for which you hope is an impossibility—ah, you know not what it is to delay when everything so—it is as if in the death-struggle one would defer the end. And why ? for an impossibility ! Yet once more these painful feelings—yet once more to take leave !! But you wish it !

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you not write ? The hours creep on so slowly. I suffer grievously, but the thought that you have willed it does me good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Not a word from you ! What can it mean ? It is already evening—a portentous and stormy evening—Anna, in my heart it is still more portentous. Write a pacifying word to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My soul is so unhappy—so irritable,—I have suffered so much, I suffer still infinitely. All wild tormenting spirits are still so near to me ; oh fear to provoke them ! Anna, say one word to me !

AXEL TO ANNA.

And yet I *will*, I *must*, seek for peace with you. You cannot deceive me. Yes, I feel it,—you might murder me—I would kiss the dagger and still believe on you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Lieutenant Papperto is with you ! How can he go so often, when I find it impossible to obtain an entrance—and at the same time so late ? Why is he with you ? Is it he who will pay my debts ; or, perhaps, you and he together ? I am really extremely affected !

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I confide in you—yes, I confide in you,—although—but I am unhappy, in despair,—tell me what you do, what you wish ?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have been told that Lieutenant Papperto, has resigned in your favour a considerable property which had been left to you in common by a near relation—a relation, heaven knows who it was ; for my part, God himself be with us ! I have been told that you embraced Lieutenant Papperto—that you wept in his arms, on his bosom. I have been told that you

are betrothed. A busy friend has hastened to gladden me with these tidings. Is it true, Anna? Death and the devil, is it true?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, if you are thus—if you have thus forsaken me—yourself—what will become of me, Anna? In whom shall I still believe?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Your silence is an answer. Then it is true. Ha, woman, woman! Snake, monster! Oh, where can I find the true expression? Where can I get words to describe my feelings? Detestable payment of my debts! Payment with the selling of a soul. Ha, ha, ha, ha!—Do you understand me? I write down my laughter—ha, ha, ha! Thus I shall set off on my journey, rich in sad experience. It is now night—the hour is come—hurrah! Welcome storm-wind, which salutes my forehead as a brother, and dances upon my nocturnal way. Yes, nocturnal, nocturnal! Farewell, Anna, I leave you my cur——. I pity you!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, stay! Ah, forgive! I could not write earlier. The brightest light suddenly in the deepest darkness—that would be too much—I could not bear it. Emil is a noble man—I have embraced him—but for your sake. I can now no more. I am thine, Axel, thine!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I am very ill. Oh, I never thought that happiness could be so oppressive—I am not able to bear it. Axel, we are rich! Lieutenant Papperto will unite us, will move our relations. L——, whom you wounded, will not die. Your debts will be paid—all will be good. Poor Axel, how I have pitied you! Forgive me all your disquiet, your despair. I was not in a state to give you an explanation such as you ought to have had, and as you desired.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

My illness increases, but I am perfectly conscious. I draw together my bed-curtains, say that I will sleep, but write to you. I fear, however, that it will be illegible. If I die, then I can and will leave my property to you. With one part of it, pay your debts; with the rest, seek to make yourself, and others, happy; but never play, Axel, never more!

ANNA TO AXEL.

[*A day later.*

Prepare yourself for all, my friend; I have, perhaps, only one day longer to live. Axel, do not give yourself up to

despair. I will never leave you. You will not wander lonesome through the world, whether you meet with joy or sorrow; your Anna will invisibly attend you, true as when she yet wore your ring, as a child of heaven, still the bride of her Axel. Ought, indeed, two souls, which have once found each other, ever to become separated by anything? Should two flames, which have united, part and burn each for itself? Oh no! my spirit will float around you—be near to you—attend you ever. You will feel it near to you, delicious as a breath of spring, or as the fragrance of flowers—or as a caress, a kiss, pure and gentle as a moonbeam. When you feel yourself good, strong; or when you feel yourself happy, consoled, or full of hope, or only calm,—then think that your Anna is near you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, for the first time, now I understand that glorious apparition which so affected me. The angels of faith, of love, and of hope, beside a grave, illumined by the glorious sun of God. It has reference to you, my Axel. From the quiet grave, where Anna will soon repose, will these three show you the way home, where she awaits you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My consciousness begins to be confused. Yet a few words to you, my Axel, although I do not know whether I have not already written them. I have left my property to you. I could do so according to law and right. With one part thereof, you must pay your debts—— My Axel, do not gamble again. With the remainder, you must make yourself and others happy. If you marry, be a good husband. Not violent—— Not jealous—— Not a gambler—— A wife suffers much from these failings. It is wrong and cruel to distress her who looks for her entire happiness from you. Be good to the poor. Be unjust to no one. Fight no duels. Blood demands blood. Fear God. Think on Anna!

AXEL TO ANNA.

That which I shall now do I tell you beforehand, that you may be prepared for it, and not be shocked. I shall come down to you—knock down the drawing-room door—knock down all the doors, if they are locked—knock everybody down, or dead, who will keep me back—go in, and seat myself near you, that I may, with the strength of a despair which will compel fate to my side and conquer death itself, retain your angel soul in your angel body. I follow these lines.

AXEL TO ANNA. [*Three days later.*

I came to you, Anna, wild, in nameless despair—saw you—was calm, and learned to pray. I saw you almost about to leave me, and to depart to a better home, which is so well known to you, but from which I was excluded,—and was able again to pray. You are again given to me—to earth and to me. And now, angel of heaven, teach me to pray—and to give thanks.

AXEL TO ANNA. [*A day later.*

They will not allow me to be with you; you require rest, they say. Yes, my Anna, I confess that my nature has no resemblance to the west wind; but it shall ever more and more acquire it. Your last letter, my Anna, shall always rest on my heart; like a talisman, it shall there operate against all that is evil, and for all that is good. I have embraced Emil as my benefactor and friend. We have been together to-day, to L——, my opponent, and the victim of my fury. He is out of all danger. I turned to his mother with the difficult word *pardon* (which, alas, is now become customary to me), and L—— and I have shaken hands and promised never to play again.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Through the care of the noble-minded Emil are my debts already paid. Oh, I am not worthy of my happiness! It weighs upon me,—it almost weighs me down. If I for one year were a Trappist, were to wear a hair shirt, were to scourge myself a little every day, to lie upon nails, to go about silently and with eyes cast down, not to see the sun, and to dig my own grave,—then I fancy I should gain a little courage to become happy. I said this also in the fullness of my heart to Emil. He laughed, and asked whether, as the beginning of my designed penance, I would not impose upon myself the not seeing Anna again for a month's time. It would be just as good to bury me at once! Anna, you are my life, my all. The austerity of the Trappist life is nothing, all physical martyrdom is mere child's play; but not to see you—that is martyrdom, that is death!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I would that I could with my breath suck up the time, and thereby bring on the quicker the moment when I may again see you; and yet I enjoy drop by drop this time, of which every minute conveys to you more power of life, more strength. Fear not my presence, my dear Anna; I will be quiet, calm, immovable as your clock, if I might only reckon

the hours by it near to you. I want to see what they give you, and how they nurse you. Do not take any more medicine; it does no good when people are getting better, excepting that it spoils one's teeth, and teaches one to make faces. Do not take anything but what is agreeable to you, let people say what they may!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Wait, and wait, and wait, for ever! You good people, who so calmly and so immovably admonish to patience, and waiting, and quietness, Heaven must have made you, in its anger, out of so much earth, that you cannot conceive to yourselves an idea of fire and air. Your barometer, which perpetually stands at the monotonous height of steady and fine weather, has not the least thing in common with that which for ever falls and rises in sensitive hearts—from repose to storm—from sunshine to rain. God bless you, ye good folks! I am sorry for you with my whole heart.

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is you, Anna, whom I have to thank, that I no longer feel those oppressive pangs, those gnawings of conscience. Fear not, my Anna, that although the consequences of my transgressions—crimes they were—through the mercy of God, were so soon abrogated—fear not that the remembrance will ever be extinguished in my soul. I shall never forget them!—I will remind myself every moment how fervently I must strive after making you forget what I once was. My gentle Anna, thou only shalt forget it.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I can hold the pen once more!—can again write to Axel—my Axel! Yet you must not come down to me; I am still too weak. To see you again, with the full consciousness—with the full feeling of our happiness—for that I am still too weak.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My thanks, Axel, for the flowers, fruit, and all which you have sent to me. My chamber now resembles a beautiful garden. My aunt, to be sure, is not satisfied with this change; but she does not trust herself to say one word against it. Ever since the moment when you from the sill of my chamber-door set her up aloft on the bookcase, and besought her to be quiet, has she had such a panic fear of you that she never ventures to touch anything which comes from you. She seems to dread that an electrical spark may start forth from the thing which you have handled. As far as concerns myself, I find the flowers so beautiful, the fruit

so good, that I see myself surrounded by them with the most heartfelt satisfaction, although they come from the wild, violent Axel. Axel, we have been, however, unjust towards our relations. We wished to plunge into misery—they wished to hinder our doing so. Were they wrong in doing so? They were perhaps too stern, but their intention was good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

You are worse to-day, Rosina tells me—the strong smell of the flowers. Oh! I, bird of ill luck! Pull them out, and fling all the pots out of the window, this very moment, otherwise I shall come and do it myself. Anna, may I? Anna, let me come! . . .

ANNA TO AXEL.

Out of compassion for the heads of the poor passers-by, and out of justice to the innocent flower-pots themselves, they are not thrown out of the window, but only carried out into another room; where I, for the first time, will again see my Axel, when I have strength enough for it. You may not come to me. In the mean time, be quite easy about me—I am now well again.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Now God be praised!—that is all I can say. Should not you, however, take a strengthening medicine? Ask the doctor, dearest Anna. Or it is the best that I should speak with him when he comes from you—the happy fellow!

ANNA TO AXEL.

We shall see whether you recognise me, Axel, when you see me again. I am very much changed by my illness; thin, pale, with sunken eyes and cheeks; not any longer pretty, no longer like the Crown Princess in the least.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Look, Anna, I imagine to myself that you are become lame—that your eyes are little and squinting like your aunt's—that your nose is flat, your teeth black, your hands green, your feet big. I imagine to myself that my Anna is become thus through my fault; my Anna, with her angel-heart, her heavenly goodness. And at the feet of *this* Anna, I long, I burn with impatience, to throw myself, and to say to her—“Anna, I am unworthy of you, but I love you indescribably. Despise me not—thrust me not away—love me for my love's sake. Be again poor—but be mine; and, as a begging-gipsy, I will nevertheless every day of my life thank heaven and you for a happiness whose excess I am unable to bear.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oh, fanatic! I fear your wings will not carry you far. Be

calm in the mean time—you will not be so severely tried. Anna is no longer lovely—she does not however look *thus*. But Axel, when will you be less violent, less eccentric, when more reasonable?

AXEL TO ANNA.

When you are my wife; when I see you, hear you, am with you every day, every hour. Yet that which I lately wrote was no exaggeration, no fanaticism; it was my heart's most inward, truest feeling.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oh the indescribably charming air of spring! I enjoy it through the open window, sitting among your flowers. The sun penetrates me with new life and new warmth. The birds twitter upon the budding trees of the terrace; all is beautiful, mild, and glorious! If there be a feeling on earth that is delicious and blesses, that calls forth sweet tears of joy and of peace, it is after a bed of sickness and pain, when one awakens again to life—to a life, where only spring airs, and only flowers, beckon to us. How quiet, how pure, is all within us! How accessible are we to joy, how inclined to all that is good! I have to-day, in beautiful, inestimable moments, saluted life, and have inwardly thanked the All-good Giver of it. To-morrow, Axel, I expect you; to-morrow, about noon.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To-morrow! I cannot say more; nay, all lies in the word—to-morrow!

ANNA TO AXEL.

We will be quiet and calm, Axel. We were children before—now we are become old. We have suffered—do not let us forget that. Like tempests, which purify the air, are the passions to the soul. When they have ceased to rage, may they also have been so to us. Axel, we will be quiet, clear, pure, and full of peace, like this beautiful spring day.

To-day, about noon, Axel. I have selected the most beautiful oranges, that I may eat them with you. You must also see how well your flowers have been cared for. To water them, and attend to them, has been the first and dearest exercise of my returning strength.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have seen you! For several hours I have not been able to write. Now it is evening—dark, silent, calm—now I am stiller. But I know one thing only; I feel one thing; I have seen you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, you are divinely good—angelically beautiful! Oh, you have nothing earthly about you! Your love, Anna! Oh, that is everything for me!

AXEL TO ANNA.

How charming were you in the white simple dress! Dress always thus, Anna! White does not become every one, but it seems made for you—you snow-white innocence! How you sate there in the bright flower world, so simple, so white, so inexpressibly lovely! you seemed to me a pure angel, whose lofty humility ought to receive the homage of all the greatness of the earth. For one moment it fell like a veil before my eyes; I took this for a cloud which floated around you, and I fancied for one inconsiderate minute, that you were being floated away to the land which is high above the clouds. At your knees, your hands in mine, my lips upon yours, I awoke—saw you—saw myself—saw the earth—No, heaven.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I can scarcely accustom myself to my happiness, so sudden, so great, so undeserved, as it is. Every morning it surprises me almost like an earthquake. And I must, indeed, speak Anna's sweet name fifty times before the stormy beating of my heart becomes calmer.

Now I must see Emil, and tell him that he is an angel. I will go to him. Ah, there he comes even to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A house bought—furniture; the domestic management brought into order—my business arranged; the banns published to-day—in eight days the marriage! “Emil, who art thou? Art thou an angel—a God?” “I am—Anna's lover!” “Oh, the thous—you should leave that!” “I will be your common friend.” “You may never come into my house!” “Thither shall I—not now—I will take a journey.” “But you come again, however?” “As a married man. Farewell, Axel! be worthy of Anna, be happy!”

This Emil—and—and I! Anna, how does this Emil please you?

ANNA TO AXEL.

He is better, nobler than Axel; but I only love Axel; so unreasonable, so inexplicable is the human heart, so weak is mine. Do you reproach me, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, reconcile me with myself. I am not worthy of you—I never can be!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I love you—and in a few days will be your wife—who from you expects her whole well-being—her whole happiness.

Your little sister shall come to us. I will be her mother.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If the angels of heaven would take in hand to make people wise and good by benefits, I would bet ten to one that they would succeed. I write no more to you, Anna—I remain with you. Notes remind me only of bolted doors, of jealousy, mis-trusts, and despair; and away with bolted doors, with black despair, black jealousy, and all black things—yes, even with ink—away with it! May these between my wife and me never become necessary!

ANNA TO AXEL.—*Amen!*

JANNE TO HER SISTER ULLA.

Do you know, dear Ulla, the correspondence, as it was called, is now at an end. The whole spring-time have I been running up-stairs and down stairs with little written bits of paper, called notes, between a young lady and a young gentleman. And I had always the while a pair of boots or shoes, which I was always cleaning in my hand, and I looked as innocent as a blacking-bottle. And do you know that for every note which I delivered in the stated place, I got one, or indeed two, three shillings, and several times a whole dollar in my pocket. Several times I received a few good sound boxes on my ear from the young gentleman, who was passionate beyond measure; and indeed for this reason, because I had not a note, whilst he declared that I must have one, namely, from the young lady. For which, however, I afterwards received as a plaster, a twelve-shilling note, so that I would willingly have had more of them.

How many notes there were altogether is more than my poor head can count. The sum and substance is, that I have scraped together thirty rixdollars; that I shall leave the dear city of Stockholm, where a bit of bread-and-butter costs more than the whole stomach is worth; that I hasten home towards Småland, buy our mother a little house, and after all my drudgery settle down with her in quiet. Here I am no longer of any use. The correspondence is at an end. The gentlefolks are married. God give them His peace! —

THE END.

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